

SULOCHANA SERPİL ÖZTÜRK

PATANJALI YOGA SUTRAS

YOGA YOLU

To my dear children Bora and Deniz...
To their children Ozan, Alara, Derin and Derya...
And to all children...

Lokah samastah sukhino bhavantu
May all beings on Earth be happy.

Prologue

The great master Patanjali, about whom we know nothing beyond mythological information regarding his life, wrote this work on yoga in the form of sutras. A sutra is a style of writing used in ancient centuries, which gradually and in-depth explains a piece of knowledge from the beginning to the end.

Sutra arrangement means to string together. Here, there are concise sentences that have the quality of aphorisms. These concise words are strung together like pearls. When all of them come together, they form a whole, like a beautiful pearl necklace.

Patanjali's Yoga Sutras are the oldest source of knowledge written about yoga, systematically explaining yoga and its mysteries.

I have been focused on just two books for over 15 years: the Yoga Sutras and the Bhagavad Gita. I am very fortunate to have come across great teachers and books on these subjects.

As I understood and practiced yoga, I became certain that I was part of a very solid teaching. For years, I have been teaching Yoga Philosophy once a week. I share this knowledge, which excites and inspires me, with my students, the knowledge I trust and believe in.

My students told me, "Words fly, but writing remains," and they insisted that I turn this knowledge into a book. They were the ones who guided and encouraged me to write this book. This book is the product of my belief in yoga.

When it comes to reaching the depth of the teachings given by a magnificent master like Patanjali and speaking about it, I honestly find myself very courageous. I believe that in my future lives, this book will mature even more.

I know that reaching a wide audience through writing is more possible, and I hope that this book brings the readers closer to yoga and inspires them in their practice.

I would like to express my gratitude and thanks to my dear husband Mustafa Öztürk, who supported me in writing this book; to my beloved daughter Deniz Kırıl, with whom I walk hand in hand on the path of yoga; to my dear editor Zeynep Erdemir, who made invaluable contributions in turning my work into a book; to my dear friend Zeren Ertürkmen, who supported this book with her designs; to my student friends, and finally to my esteemed teacher Ramaray Das, who introduced me to yoga and instilled the love of yoga in me.

Serpil Öztürk

Serpil Öztürk worked as a literature teacher at Ankara Atatürk High School and as a Turkish Language instructor at Ankara University.,

Having taught yoga for 20 years, Serpil Öztürk studied Bhakti Yoga at the Krishna Consciousness Ashrams in Vrindavan and Govardhan, India; Vinyasa Yoga, Vedic Chanting, and Yoga Therapy at the Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram in Chennai; Ashtanga Yoga in the tradition of Sri K. Patabhi Jois in Mysore; and Yoga Therapy at the Vivekananda Yoga Institute in Bangalore. She has also had the opportunity to explore and practice many styles of yoga in Europe and the United States.

Embracing yoga as a way of life, Serpil Öztürk opened a studio called Yoga Yolu in 2000. Through this studio, she passed on the world's oldest tradition of knowledge—yoga—to many people and trained many students and teachers.

Having recently settled in Yalıkavak, Bodrum, Serpil Öztürk continues her classes at her studio Yoga Yolu.

About Patanjali

Although Patanjali played a very important role in the formation and development of some fundamental systems of Indian philosophy, information about his life is very limited. Various legends about Patanjali appear in Indian folklore.

One of the legends is as follows: Lord Vishnu is peacefully resting in heaven on Adishesha, the serpent god. Meanwhile, people living on Earth are suffering. Waves of pain and distress spread due to the unrest in their minds, physical illnesses, and communication problems. In their desperation, people turn to wise sages and seek their help. The sages, in turn, pray to Lord Vishnu, the protector of the world, asking him to relieve humanity of these three types of suffering. Lord Vishnu hears their prayers and sends Adishesha to save the world. According to the legend, Adishesha falls into the palms of the sages, who are praying with their hands in Anjali Mudra.

Patanjali's name is derived from the combination of "pat," meaning "to fall," and "anjali," meaning "palm." Thus, Patanjali means "the one who falls into the palms."

Another name for Patanjali is Gonikaputra, which means "son of Gonika." According to another legend, the great yogini Gonika wishes for a son to whom she can pass on her knowledge before she dies. To fulfill this wish, she brings her hands into Anjali Mudra and prays. Patanjali falls into her palms in the form of a small snake. Then, the upper half of this snake transforms into a four-armed human form.

In India, it is a tradition to elevate extraordinary individuals to the status of deities and turn them into mysterious figures. Patanjali has also been influenced by this tradition. Although there are different opinions about the exact period in which he lived, the most widely accepted view is that he was born sometime between 500 and 200 BCE.

Patanjali left three great works to resolve the restlessness in people's minds with the Yoga Sutras, bodily diseases with Ayurveda, and communication problems with Sanskrit grammar.

With the Yoga Sutras he wrote on the doctrine of yoga, the teaching was systematized for the first time. This work is a highly important reference for yogis.

Today, most people mistakenly believe that yoga is a type of sport and assume that a series of physical postures constitute yoga. However, thousands of years ago, Patanjali conveyed the true essence of yoga. The master defines yoga as the discipline of the mind and provides knowledge on understanding the mind, training it, and exploring its undiscovered potentials.

As for Patanjali's work on Ayurveda, although these texts have not yet been discovered today, some sources on Ayurveda have mentioned his work as a reference.

Patanjali also worked on Sanskrit grammar. The significance of this work lies in his commentary on Panini's Sanskrit Grammar. This great work is known as Mahabhasya (The Great Commentary). Today, almost every Sanskrit language school benefits from Patanjali's Mahabhasya in understanding this ancient language.

About the Book

Patanjali structured the Yoga Sutras into four sections.

Chapter 1 - Samadhi Pada: Samadhi refers to the merging of individual consciousness with cosmic consciousness. In other words, it is the unification of the mind and heart, elevating consciousness to the soul.

For this, the mind, which veils the soul, must be trained to become a perfect instrument. Patanjali explains methods for gradually disciplining the mind. A refined and perfected mind is one that can focus effortlessly, remains unwavering, and possesses great strength.

Chapter 2 - Sadhana Pada: Sadhana refers to personal practices aimed at calming the mind and fostering spiritual growth.

In the Yoga Sutras, Patanjali explains the Ashtanga Yoga teaching. Ashtanga means the eightfold path or the eight-limbed path. This section covers the first five limbs of the path.

It describes the ways individuals can live correctly, harmoniously, and peacefully, both within themselves and in alignment with their surroundings.

Chapter 3 - Vibhuti Pada: Vibhuti means "ash" and symbolizes mystical powers. This section refers to a miraculous transformation, akin to being reborn from one's own ashes. It describes the mystical powers attained through an iron will and intense spiritual practices.

Chapter 4 - Kaivalya Pada: Kaivalya means transcending all limitations and restrictions, achieving ultimate freedom. This fourth section is an exciting one, as it describes the rewards attained through yoga. Here, all the previously given teachings and concepts come together and unfold like a blooming flower.

This section represents both the culmination of philosophy and the promise of an elevation beyond what an ordinary person could ever imagine. It reveals the ultimate ascent in the yogic journey.

Yoga is the name of a system composed of step-by-step techniques and methods. Anyone who practices these disciplines knows how profoundly yoga fosters healing and transformation.

For those seeking a deeper understanding and a closer experience of yoga's healing power, the most reliable source is Patanjali's Yoga Sutras.

Since the knowledge in this book comes from thousands of years ago, uses a different terminology and language, and deals with the entirely abstract subject of the mind, it may initially seem difficult or even inaccessible to the reader.

My purpose in writing this book is to help the reader understand and embrace the teaching. For this reason, I have tried to avoid technical terminology as much as possible and used a more everyday language.

Yoga offers very practical methods for individuals to achieve peace, health, and ease. Anyone can learn and apply these practices.

This book, divided into four sections, contains 196 sutras. When addressing a concept, the sutras have been grouped together to explain it more clearly. I have called these groups "families."

I presented the sutras in family structures so that the reader could progress slowly and understand them step by step. My intention was for each family to be fully grasped before moving on to the next, as these families form a cohesive whole within themselves while also being interconnected.

Spiritual books are not meant to be read and simply set aside with a sense of completion. They require reflection and internalization of the knowledge they offer. A book should create a shift in a person's understanding and consciousness, bringing transformation and growth.

When a person rereads these books at different times, they will notice that their relationship with the knowledge and their perception of it have changed. In other words, it is beneficial for the reader to keep this book close at hand and revisit it repeatedly.

With the hope that the path of yoga remains open to all...

Sulochana Serpil Öztürk

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CHAPTER 1 - SAMADHI PADA

The Merging of Individual Mind with Cosmic Mind

Sutra 1.1

Atha yoganusasanam

Atha: Now

Yoga: Union, oneness, being one

Anusasanam: Instruction, teaching, guidance

Now, it is time for instructions on yoga.

The sutras start with the word "atha" which means, now. Now, is the word with which many teachings begin, and it carries various meanings. Patanjali uses the word now, to show that the student is ready to understand the knowledge, that this wisdom always remains fresh in the present, and that those who discovered it thousands of years ago and those who learn it now, meet in the infinity of time.

Yoga means unity. But what kind of unity is this? It is the unity of I and you, I and the environment, I and nature. It is a dissolution, the melting away of the "I" and becoming one with everything. After some time, a person feels that unity is the union of their own essence with the universal essence.

When a person begins to yoga, they are first taught to be in harmonious unity with their body, breath, and mind. The mind controls the body, and the breath governs both. Unity begins this way. Then, a sense of relaxation and expansion emerges from this harmony. As inner peace fills the person, their relationship with themselves, their surroundings, nature, and God, transforms.

In yoga, there is a concept called Atman. Atman refers to a person's divine essence, their individual soul. The purpose of yoga is to realize the unity of Atman (person's soul) and Paramatman (the universal soul).

The word Yoga also means absolute, uninterrupted focus and concentration. To be one and whole, concentration and mental stability are necessary.

"Anusasanam" means explanation or instruction. The master tells the student reading the sutras: "At this stage of your journey, let me explain what yoga is and how to attain it."

The Yoga Sutras are written, to guide the reader on the path of yoga and to lead them the way.

Sutra 1.2

Yogah chitta vrtti nirodhah

Yogah: Union, oneness

Chitta: Mind, consciousness (the field that includes all layers of the mind, such as thoughts, emotions, memories, intellect, and ego)

Vrtti: Thought waves

Nirodhah: Withdrawal, restraint

Yoga is the state in which all waves of the mind withdraw.

This sutra is the foundation of all sutras. Because the others serve specially to deepen the understanding of this one.

Yoga speaks of going beyond all the waves in the mind. That is, going beyond all the thoughts and emotions. Creating the silence in the mind, even deactivating it. What does this mean, and how can it be possible?

Chitta refers to the layers of the mind. All layers, such as emotions, thoughts, consciousness, the subconscious, ego are expressed by this word. The sutra speaks of transcending this magnificent and unseen field of existence, which governs all of life.

To transcend something, one must know and understand it deeply. A person must learn what the mind is and how it functions, as clearly as they know the palm of their own hand.

Patanjali explains in his sutras that the infinite source of knowledge and bliss already exists within a person. Realizing it, the mind, must be transcended for clearing the way. If the mind is not trained, it suffers due to the chaos and turmoil of the external world. However, if it is trained, it can reflect the light and magnificence of the soul from which it originates, attaining infinite peace and happiness. The mind can be trained and strengthened gradually through patient practice.

For thousands of years, the timeless power and impact of the Yoga Sutras lie in their ability to reveal both readers' weaknesses and their strength. It carries the potential to serve as a mirror for self-reflection. Every sutra in this book explains the mind, its structure, characteristics, functions, and the methods through which it can be transformed.

"There are eyes beyond the ones we see with, and I have seen you with those eyes. There are ears beyond the ones we hear with, and I have heard you with those ears. I have touched you, not with the body, but with the heart. Existence lies beyond the senses; it is infinite, without beginning or end. This is the journey I wish you to take."

Osho, Love Letters

Sutra 1.3

Tada drashtuh svarupe avasthanam

Tada: From then on, therefore, at that moment

Drashtuh: The seer, the seeker (the one who observes)

Svarupe: One's true essence, own nature

Avasthanam: To dwell, to settle

At that moment (when chitta vrtti nirodhah is achieved), the seeker settles into his true essence.

As a person lives captivated by the allure of the world perceived through the senses, they become completely disconnected from their true essence. Their mind remains in constant motion, restless and unsettled.

The turmoil of emotions and thoughts can be compared to waves and a storm. When the waters are rough and the storm is raging, only the surface can be seen. But when the sea calms and becomes still, its depths are revealed. Likewise, when the mind's endless struggles come to rest, a person becomes able to see their true essence (svarupa).

Sutra 1.4

Vrtti sarupyam itaratra

Vrtti: Wave

Sarupyam: Identification, mistaking oneself for it

Itaratra: Otherwise, in other cases

Otherwise, the person identifies themselves with the waves of the mind.

When a person identifies with the fluctuations of the mind, thoughts and emotions such as "I am sad," "I am happy," "I am rich," "I am ugly" arise. However, these are merely temporary states.

Sometimes, a person also identifies with the roles they take on in life, saying "I am an artist," "I am a manager," and so on. Yet, these roles are also temporary. In this way, instead of seeking what is truly real, the person gets carried away by the fleeting nature of the world of appearances.

In the 17th century, Descartes, with his statement "I think, therefore I am," exalted thinking and emphasized human superiority over animals due to the power and ability to think. However, thousands of years earlier, Patanjali, with "Yogah chitta vrtti nirodhah," emphasized that a person can go beyond thinking itself and, in doing so, unite with their true essence—their divine identity.

Sutra 1.5

Vrittayah pancatayyah klishta aklishtah

Vrittayah: Changes in the mind, mental activity

Pancatayyah: Fivefold, five types

Klishta: Painful, distressing, causing suffering

Aklishtah: Not painful, bringing happiness

There are five types of mental states for a person, sometimes bringing pleasure and sometimes causing pain.

In this sutra, Patanjali classifies all types of wave fluctuations in the mind, known as chitta vrttis, categorizing them. He states that these five types of mental modifications sometimes bring pain and sometimes bring pleasure and happiness.

These five states will be explained in the following sutras. The key point to focus on here is that some of these states are perceived in the mind as pleasure, while others are experienced as pain. In reality, neither emotions are truly real—they are merely illusions of the mind.

Pleasure and pain, like the swinging of a pendulum in two directions, pull a person away from balance. If what is perceived as happiness is merely a state of moving away from the center, then it cannot be true happiness. Because this movement inevitably leads to swinging back in the opposite direction—toward sadness. As long as the mind remains active, a person will continuously shift between pleasure and pain, endlessly tossed back and forth between them. Therefore, until the state of chitta vrtti nirodhah—the withdrawal of mental waves—described in the second sutra is achieved, true peace and balance will remain unattainable.

Sutra 1.6

Pramana viparyaya vikalpa nidra smrtayah

Pramana: True knowledge, true perception, that which is real

Viparyaya: False knowledge, misconception

Vikalpa: Delusion, illusion, fallacy, superstition, imagination

Nidra: Deep sleep state

Smrtayah: Memory, recollection

(The five states of the mind are) True knowledge, false knowledge, illusion, the state of sleep, and memory.

The five states mentioned above are classified forms of the mind fluctuations and transformations. The existence of the mind is revealed only through these states. To attain chitta vrtti nirodhah, it is essential to recognize these mental states, because awareness is the first step toward understanding the structure of the mind.

In the following sutras, these five states of the mind are explained one by one.

Sutra 1.7

Pratyaksha anumana agamah pramanani

Pratyaksha: Direct perception

Anumana: Inference, reasoning, analysis

Agamah: Learning from sacred texts through teachers

Pramanani: Proven truths

Knowledge acquired through direct perception (meditation), reasoning and analysis, and learning from sacred texts is called true knowledge.

In this sutra, patanjali, explains how one can attain true knowledge, which is the first of the mental states mentioned in the previous sutra.

One of the ways to achieve this is meditation. Meditation is the process of drawing knowledge directly from its source. In this state, the everyday mind is transcended, allowing access to the subtler levels of the mind. This is called direct perception.

The second path is research, inquiry, and analysis in the pursuit of true knowledge. Knowledge gained through this path reveals unchanging truth. The key is to question, explore, and seek true knowledge.

Another path is learning from sacred texts that convey the truth. The validity of these texts lies in the fact that they contain knowledge attained by enlightened yogis through deep meditation. Their truth remains timeless and universal, unaffected by time or place.

Sutra 1.8

Viparyayah mithyajnanam atadrupa pratishtham

Viparyayah: False knowledge

Mithya: Mistaken, illusion, error

Jnanam: Knowledge

Atad: Not true, not real, without essence

Rupa: Form, shape, appearance

Pratishtham: To be established, to settle

False knowledge is knowledge based on illusion, in which case a person becomes established in what is not real.

Everyone perceives the world and life through the filter of their own mind. What is true or beautiful for one person, may not be the same for another.

Truth can vary from person to person and even change over time within the same individual. From a universal perspective, knowledge that is so variable and subjective is considered "false knowledge."

Mistaking a rope for a snake due to a play of light, seeing a mirage in the desert, or believing oneself to be superior because of status are examples of this. Due to incomplete or incorrect knowledge and misunderstanding, realities may appear entirely different and can shape a person's life.

False knowledge makes a person believe that maya—the world of illusion—is real.

Problems arise when such false knowledge takes root. These misconceptions lead to suffering. In the second chapter, suffering and its causes will be explained in detail.

Sutra 1.9

Sabdajnana anupati vastusunya vikalpah

Sabdajnana: Sözel bilgi

Anupati: Sırayla takip etmek

Vastunya: Temeli olmayan

Vikalpah: Kuruntu, yanılsama, safsata, hurafe, hayali, olasılıklar

Verbal knowledge without a foundation fills the mind with imaginary concepts.

In the previous sutras, the concepts of true knowledge, which conveys reality, and false knowledge, which is subjective, were explained. One way or another, both types of knowledge are based on some foundation.

In this sutra, Patanjali speaks of a mental state that lacks a foundation—one that is formed by delusion, imagination, superstition, and fabrication. In this state, the mind creates unreal stories about people and events.

The further one moves away from reality, the closer they come to delusion and superstition.

Sutra 1.10

Abhava pratyaya alambana vrttih nidra

Abhava: Absence of awareness

Pratyaya: Content of the mind

Alambana: Foundation, object, support

Vrttih: Thought waves

Nidra: State of sleep

In the state of sleep, where awareness is absent, the objects that make up the content of the mind disappear, and all thought waves that sustain the mind vanish.

The dream state is one of the functions of the mind. Dreams symbolically represent aspects of our lives. Deep sleep, on the other hand, is a state where all mental functions cease—where the switch is turned off, and one enters a void lacking awareness.

In deep sleep, all three mental states mentioned in the previous sutras are suspended, and the mind enters a state of deep rest. However, even this void-like state still belongs to the mind and is one of its defining conditions. This is because it occurs beyond a person's will and ends as soon as deep sleep is over.

The state of sleep should not be confused with “Chitta vrtti nirodhah” as described in the second sutra. Sleep is a mental state, whereas “Chitta vrtti nirodhah” is the conscious withdrawal of the mind.

Sutra 1.11

Anubhutavishaya asampramoshah smrtih

Anubhuta: Experience

Vishaya: Objects, things

Asampramoshah: Not erasing, not letting go, storing, preserving

Smrtih: Memory, awareness, recollection

Experienced things are not erased. They are stored in memory, and their emergence causes fluctuations in the mind.

Remembering is the resurfacing of impressions formed by past experiences at the level of the mind. Memory acts as an archive, storing and preserving everything from the past. The emergence of the past—the act of remembering—is a function of the mind. Pleasant memories lead to longing, while unpleasant memories cause sorrow. Both are fluctuations of the mind.

However, it should be noted that memory is highly valuable for yoga. Everything learned must be preserved and applied when needed. This is how higher knowledge can be built. A sharp memory is essential in this regard, while forgetfulness is a mental weakness.

Memory consists of past experiences stored beyond the everyday mind, in the subconscious. Some of these memories are active, while others remain dormant, deep within. These, too, are different states of existence of the mind.

Sutra 1.12

Abhyasa vairagyabhyam tannirodhah

Abhyasa: Regular practice, disciplined effort

Vairagyabhyam: Freedom from desires, renunciation, detachment from attachments

Tan: Their, of them

Nirodhah: Withdrawal, restraint

Freedom from desires and becoming independent by renouncing them, regular practice is required.

This sutra, like the second sutra, is one of the most well-known and widely emphasized sutras. In this sutra, the concepts of abhyasa (regular practice) and vairagya (renunciation, freedom from desires, detachment from attachments) are introduced. These two concepts are fundamental principles of yoga.

This sutra and the second sutra complement each other because the state of chitta vrtti nirodhah can only be achieved by freeing oneself from endless desires and attachments that seem indispensable and by practicing this continuously.

According to yoga, the more desires, attachments, and dependencies a person has, the more complex and restless their mind becomes. Endless desires disrupt inner peace completely. As a person chases after their desires, their mind becomes confused, and their balance is disturbed. Emotions such as jealousy, ambition, anger, and pride are all weaknesses that arise due to desires.

In worldly life, the possibility of desires coming to an end does not exist. As soon as one desire is fulfilled, new ones arise. It is said that satisfying desires is like drinking salty water to quench thirst—the more you consume, the thirstier you become.

Restraining desires and becoming free from them, in other words, vairagya naturally happens as one progresses in yoga. This is because true renunciation is not merely giving something up but choosing something far more valuable in its place.

Yoga binds a person to higher ideals. As a person increases their inner peace and happiness through yoga, they begin to realize that this peace and happiness are not closely related to the fleeting pleasures of the external world. In all types of yoga, renunciation and standing a little beyond the temporary states offered by the external world are among the most important steps.

To break free from the captivity of desires and the chains of attachments requires constant awareness, continuous effort, and practice (abhyasa) along with self-discipline.

A person must realize the changing and transient nature of things and seek the truth and the infinite beyond the changing. There is no other path to spiritual growth.

Sutra 1.13

Tatra sthitau yatnah abhyasah

Tatra: There, in that, on this path

Sthitau: Stable, permanent, steadfast

Yatnah: Continuous effort, exertion

Abhyasah: Regular practice, disciplined effort

One must work steadily and persistently on this path.

In yoga, much emphasis is placed on the dilemma of pleasure and pain, because desires and attachments stem from pleasure and pain. A person is expected to be awake and aware in these matters. It is recommended to constantly remember the transient nature of deceptive pleasures and pains, and to prefer simplicity, modesty, and serenity.

This sutra speaks of continuous effort and constant awareness.

Let's consider a person with high blood pressure or diabetes. For this person to heal, they must follow the diet prescribed by the doctor, which requires giving up certain things and removing them from their life. This is a discipline that must continue throughout life. There must be constant reminders, awareness, and effort in this regard.

Overcoming the discomfort caused by illness depends on both following the prescribed diet and consistently adhering to it. Without this, healing cannot occur.

Similarly, the yoga student must simplify their life and always keep their resolve in mind when it comes to this practice.

In Chapter 16, Verse 23 of the Bhagavad Gita, it is said: "If you follow the guidance of desires instead of the guidance of sacred texts, you will not attain happiness, perfection, or holiness."

Maya (the world of illusion) is very powerful. Just as a storm can overturn a ship, desires and passions can completely disturb a person. Therefore, to be at peace and to stop the fluctuations of the mind, reaching stillness requires regular and continuous effort.

Sutra 1.14

Sa tu dirgha kala nairantarya satkara asevitaḥ drdhabhumih

Sa: This (practice)

Tu: Truly

Dirgha: Long

Kala: Time

Nairantarya: Continuous, uninterrupted

Satkara: Devotion, sincerity

Asevita: To work with enthusiasm

Dridha: Firm, steadfast

Bhumi: Rooted, grounded

To become rooted and strengthened through yoga practice, one must truly continue with devotion and enthusiasm over a long period of time.

This sutra presents the four conditions necessary to create a steady and strong foundation in yoga.

The first condition is long duration. The more time a person spends on the path of yoga, the greater their experience will be. Yoga isn't just a theoretical philosophy; theory must always be followed by practice. Each individual gains personal experience through their own practice, and every session can provide new insights. In this way, it's not a person's age that matters, but their yoga age.

The second condition is consistent practice. The student must avoid making excuses, and the hustle and chaos of life should not interfere with their yoga practice.

Yoga is a practice that brings order, balance, and strength to a person. Through this, essential things in life, such as success, power, balance, energy, and joy, are easily attained.

Wasting time on distractions is a loss on the journey. The sooner a person reaches their goal, the better. To do this, they must not get carried away by the flow of life, but instead, follow their own path.

The third and fourth conditions emphasize devotion, working with enthusiasm, joy, and perseverance. These practices, which continue over a long period and without interruption, must always be carried out with the same excitement and passion.

This is not about a mechanical or monotonous practice. In fact, this is what makes yoga so enjoyable. Each session adds something new to the person, each one refreshes their excitement and makes them feel they are on the right path. Thus, the person who naturally connects with yoga continues their journey along the path of yoga.

Sutra 1.15

Drashta anushravika vishaya vitrishnasya vasikara samjna vairagyam

Drashta: The perceived, the seen

Anushravika: The heard, that which is promised by sacred texts

Vishaya: Objects, things

Vitrishnasya: Freedom from desires, liberation from cravings

Vasikara: To bring under control

Samjna: Consciousness, awareness

Vairagyam: Renunciation of desires, passions, and attachments

Those who have freed themselves, not only from the pleasures of this world but also from the promises of sacred texts, are individuals who have attained a conscious mind and have achieved vairagya (renunciation).

The concept of vairagya, or freedom from desires and renunciation, is a difficult concept to understand in today's consumer-driven Western world. Desires and attachments are deeply interconnected. These are the issues that most occupy and disturb the mind. This is why the Western world is living in such a state of tension today.

How can one become unaffected by the allure of the objects that the external world offers?

Suppressing desires is not the solution. This would be deceiving oneself and others, in other words, it is hypocrisy. It is also impossible to satisfy desires, because the mind constantly generates them through the external world.

The great yogi and guru Sri K. Pattabhi Jois says: "Do your yoga practice, and the rest will follow."

Yoga practice creates a sense of contentment and satisfaction in the mind. Being satisfied solves everything. To be satisfied is to not have needs, to know that you already have everything.

To be free from addiction means to sever the relationship with it at every level. Let's take an example: Imagine two people who have quit smoking. One of them is deeply disturbed when others smoke around them, while the other doesn't even notice that smoking is happening in the environment. In this case, the first person may have quit smoking, but their addiction still remains. As Cemal Süreya once said: "My first task used to be smoking. Now, it is not smoking."

The other person has completely erased smoking from their life and mind.

A yogi living in seclusion in India does not refuse the requests and insistence of his American student and comes to New York at his invitation. The two of them are walking between the glittering shops on New York's famous 5th Avenue. Everywhere, impressive, inviting, and wealthy consumer products are displayed. The student asks the teacher what he feels in the midst of all this colorfulness. The yogi replies: "Everything is so much; thank God, I don't need any of it."

One of yoga's slogans is: "Simple living, high thinking."

"They say in heaven
There are palaces, there are beautiful virgins,
Give those to ones who desire,
I only need you, I only crave you."
Yunus Emre

The best summary of this sutra is the above saying of Yunus Emre. Whether you live the luxury of this world or what heaven offers afterlife, Yunus Emre's heart can only be filled with the love of God, not these images. Even the heaven promised by the holy scriptures is set aside by Yunus Emre. Everything loses its value in the pursuit of attaining God's grace and union with Him.

Sutra 1.16

Tatparam purushakhyateh gunavaitrshnyam

Tatparam: The highest, the supreme

Purushakhyateh: The high knowledge of the soul, the perception of the soul

Guna: The three qualities in all things (tamas, rajas, and sattva)

Gunavaitrshnyam: Beyond the qualities, transcending the gunas

When independence reaches its ultimate point, and one is freed even from the gunas a person attains the highest, the supreme knowledge. This is the perception of the soul.

First, it is necessary to explain the concept of guna mentioned in the sutra. In the Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 14 is dedicated to this topic, where the gunas are discussed in detail.

"The gunas are energies hidden within Mother Nature. They are categorized as sattva, rajas, and tamas. Among these three, sattva is spotless, brings health, and opens the path to enlightenment. However, it still ties one to the desire for happiness and learning. Rajas, which represents movement, creates desires, passions, and attachments. A person dominated by rajas is strongly attached to worldly life. Know that tamas arises from ignorance. It binds people to delusion, laziness, and inertia. These three qualities are present in all living and non-living beings—plants, animals, and humans. One of these qualities will dominate the others, giving rise to a particular character trait in the being. Tamas represents darkness, laziness, selfishness, and ignorance; rajas represents activity, restlessness, and ambition; and sattva represents light, purity, and knowledge."

This sutra speaks of the highest level of renunciation, going beyond all the gunas. It is possible to move from tamasik to rajasik, and then to sattvik. In yoga, the techniques for this transformation are taught to the student.

In fact, tamasik individuals rarely approach the door of yoga. Even if they do, they do not stay inside. Many beginners are rajasik. The passion for action within them brings them to yoga. Through yoga practices, those who are suited for it transform into sattvik beings.

A person dominated by sattva has already detached themselves quite a bit from things, becoming lighter, more relaxed, and finding peace. However, even those who are sattvik still have their own attachments. They desire to learn, to be free, and to do good. If we encounter people around us who do good, offer service, and carry a cheerful demeanor, these are sattvik individuals.

Now, it is time to go beyond these as well. The time has come to not seek knowledge, but to become knowledge itself; to not do good, but to become goodness itself; to not wish for enlightenment, but to become enlightenment itself.

Sutra 1.17

Vitarka vichara ananda asmita rupa anugamat sam- prajnatah

Vitarka: The concrete, material form of objects, tangible objects

Vichara: Abstract concepts

Ananda: Peace, happiness

Asmita: The sense of self, ego, the feeling of being "I," forgetting the spiritual identity

Rupa: Form, shape

Anugamat: Becoming one with it (the unity of the subject and object)

Samprajnatah: The lower level of samadhi (the state of oneness)

The four stages of deep attention and concentration are, focusing on concrete forms, abstract concepts, the state of peace and happiness, and the sense of self.

As a result of these concentration practices, one reaches samprajnata samadhi.

In this sutra and the next, the process of concentration, the methods, and the resulting state of samadhi are explained. The concept of samadhi means the state of being one and whole. To reach this, focus or, in other words, concentration is necessary.

In this sutra, the first stage of samadhi is described, which is called samprajnata samadhi. In samprajnata samadhi, the state of union and oneness with an object occurs, being connected with

that object. "Sa" means with, and "prajna" refers to consciousness or insight. Samprajnata samadhi refers to the samadhi attained with knowledge and insight.

Below are the meditation techniques that develop in four stages and the four phases of samprajnata samadhi:

1. Vitarka - Concrete Forms: A tangible object is chosen for concentration, and the mind focuses on it. This could be the breath, a mantra, or any other concrete form.
2. Vichara - Abstract Concepts: Instead of focusing on concrete forms, there is a more refined mental state here. It involves focusing on abstract concepts like love, affection, the sources of colors, senses, chakras, and so on. This practice is at a more subtle level compared to the previous one.

At the levels of vitarka and vichara, by focusing on an object, one attains a deeper understanding of that object. This knowledge is much more comprehensive and internalized than the knowledge learned through the surface-level mind.

3. Ananda - Peace, Happiness: Here, the mind has become more refined, attention has sharpened, and concentration has become easier and more prolonged. At this level of the mind, the feeling of peace and joy arises spontaneously. Ananda means peace and happiness. The feeling of ananda here is very different from the peace and happiness dependent on worldly pleasures, which have the opposite extremes of pain and sorrow. It is a deep, inner, and elevated emotion.

4. Asmita - The Self: This is the state of focusing on the essence, or self, of the person who is experiencing all of the above. When a person reaches this point, they become aware of a different concept of "self" than what they previously knew. This "self" has no desires or passions, and it is a lighter, more elevated feeling.

In all four stages, the seer, the act of seeing, and the seen remain separate from one another. The mind still continues to exist vividly in that state.

Sutra 1.18

Virama pratyaya abhyasa purvah samskara shesha anyah

Virama: Withdrawal, stopping

Pratyaya: Understanding the content of the mind

Abhyasa: Regular practice, application

Purvah: Previous, that which appears first

Samskara: Deep impressions in the mind, subconscious impressions

Shesha: The remainder

Anyah: The other (samskaras)

As a result of the above practices, when the mind completely withdraws, the impressions in the subconscious (samskaras) emerge, and these distort the purity of consciousness.

In the previous sutra, the four stages of concentration are defined. In samprajnata samadhi, through attention and concentration practices focused on an object at different levels, the noise in the mind is silenced.

In this sutra, an advanced stage is described, asamprajnata samadhi. Asamprajnata samadhi is the state where the chitta vrtti nirodhah, as described in the second sutra, becomes firmly established in the mind.

The prefix "A" gives the word a negative meaning, referring to a concentration without an object. In asamprajnata samadhi, there is no longer an object or concept to focus on in the mind. The mind is in a state of emptiness, having reached a maturity and stillness where it can concentrate without an object.

However, from the deepest layers of consciousness, forgotten and dormant impressions arise. These impressions (samskaras) are the tendencies carried over from previous lives, forming the karma. The person becomes aware of them. Since the goal is to be freed from the burden of the past, these impressions must be erased through conscious effort. Otherwise, the person will regress, and the mind will return from its state of emptiness to fluctuations once again.

Sutra 1.19

Bhavapratyayah videha prakritilayanam

Bhava: Material existence

Pratyayah: To cause, to be the cause of

Videha: Bodiless, without a physical body

Prakritilayanam: Merging with nature, becoming one with nature

Due to the high spiritual levels they attained in past lives, some beings either come into the world bodiless or continue their existence by merging with Prakriti, becoming one with nature.

Here, bodiless beings are mentioned. Some beings have ascended to such a high spiritual level that they no longer need to take on a physical body, continuing their existence free from the limitations of the physical form.

However, once their credit for existing in this way is exhausted, they are reborn in a physical form. To attain enlightenment, one must come into the world in human form, experience life through reincarnation, and transcend it, ultimately resolving the issue. This is necessary because all the good and bad impressions (samskaras) carried from past lives must be erased.

Alternatively, the concept of merging with Prakriti, or prakritilaya, is mentioned. This is also a very high and mystical level. Prakriti refers to the potential state of creation that encompasses all material existence. In other words, it is the essence of the material world. The entire universe exists within this essence.

Some sources refer to Prakriti as the Holy Mother, from whom the entire universe is born. Existence merges with Prakriti, becoming one with it. However, the self remains very much alive in this state. This is why complete enlightenment has not yet been achieved. True liberation is not about merging with creation, but with the Creator.

According to Buddhism, nirvana is the complete dissolution of the self, merging with absolute consciousness. As Osho says, "When a drop of dew slips from a lotus leaf and falls into the ocean, it doesn't say, 'I am a part of the ocean,' it says, 'I am the ocean.'"

In yoga, however, samadhi differs subtly from Buddhism. In yoga, the self and individuality exist eternally and can never be erased. This is because something that exists can never cease to exist. Instead, the person perceives themselves as a part of infinity.

The state referred to as "I am That", or "So ham", is this.

Returning to the sutra, only one step remains for liberation. To take this step, one must possess yogic knowledge and absolute faith. Otherwise, there is a possibility that the person may become distracted by the allure of mystical powers, delaying the process of reaching the truth. Therefore, even bodiless beings and those in prakritilaya must maintain this awareness.

Sutra 1.20

Sraddha virya smrti samadhi prajna purvakah itaresham

Sraddha: To believe, to be certain

Virya: Willpower, effort, enthusiasm

Smrti: Memory, awareness, recollection

Samadhi: The state of oneness through deep meditation, complete integration, union

Prajna: Higher wisdom

Purvakah: Previous, earlier

Itaresham: Other individuals

Individuals can rise to the highest level of samadhi through absolute faith, dedicated effort, and deep memory and awareness.

Here, it is explained that through hard work, dedication, and the path of discipline, one can reach the highest level of samadhi.

Shraddha means to believe, to have faith. The feeling of faith here refers to the state of certainty that arises as a result of unshakable knowledge, gained through one's own efforts and experiences. It is not the kind of belief or faith that comes from being born into a religion and blindly following its rituals.

For example, when a yogi regularly practices asana (yoga postures) and pranayama (breath control to regulate life energy), they experience the changes that occur within themselves. They notice that their body and mind become healthier, more peaceful, and more aware. The faith referred to in yoga is precisely this state of certainty and knowing—a deep understanding based on personal experience. This knowledge and awareness naturally create interest and enthusiasm to continue practicing even more.

Virya is the enthusiasm and desire a person has for their practice. Someone who clearly understands the path has the strength and determination to work with full dedication. Virya represents the willpower to say, "I can do this, I must do this."

Smrti represents memory. Memory serves as a tool to remind a person of their purpose, path, efforts, and the practices they need to continue. It also involves the mind's awareness of itself—remembering past spiritual progress and encouraging the practitioner to strive for even higher levels.

Sutra 1.21

Tivra samveganam asannah

Tivra: Intense, serious

Samveganam: Effort, enthusiasm, desire for practice

Asannah: Very close, near, approaching

With intense and enthusiastic practice, the goal is reached quickly.

Osho says: "What you seek will surely be found. The river finds the ocean. Drought, finds a lake. Devotion, finds the divine. The divine is near us, but we do not take an interest in it. Awaken the desire. Just be filled with longing. Then, you will not face even a moment's delay in finding it."

Osho, Love Letters to Life

Sutra 1.22

Mrdu madhya adhimatratvat tatah api viseshah

Mrdu: Slow, mild, little

Madhya: Moderate, middle

Adhimatra: Intense, strong

Tvat: Because of, through, by means of

Tatah: Therefore, as a result, thereafter

Api: Also, additionally, even

Viseshah: Different, distinctive, having special qualities

The attainment of freedom varies depending on whether a person's practice is mild, moderate, or intense.

Here, Patanjali emphasizes that everyone is different, and efforts vary from person to person. No matter how the practice is approached, yoga is a certain path that will, sooner or later, lead a person to enlightenment in proportion to their effort.

Some people work hard yet remain distant from spirituality, while for others, the opposite is the way. However, regardless of the circumstances, anyone who desires and practices diligently will eventually reach the goal.

Sutra 1.23

Ishvara pranidhanat va

Ishvara: The creative source, pure consciousness,

Purusha, the supreme guru

Pranidhanat: Devotion, surrender

Va: Or, alternatively

Or, a person can also attain the highest samadhi through devotion to God and complete surrender to Him.

Up until Sutra 23, Patanjali describes yoga as a method and outlines step-by-step progress in yoga. However, here, he introduces a completely different path: devotion and surrender to God.

This approach belongs to Bhakti Yoga, which is also known as the yoga of love and devotion. There are different types of yoga, and each person chooses and follows the path that aligns with their own nature and characteristics.

In the Yoga Sutras, Patanjali describes Ashtanga Yoga, which is also known as Raja Yoga, or the yoga of kings. Just as a king must establish fair, valid, and consistent rules to govern his kingdom and enforce them with faith, sincerity, and discipline, Ashtanga Yoga consists of structured technical methods. Its rules are clear and precise, and following them leads a person to enlightenment.

Bhakti Yoga is more suited for individuals with an emotional nature. By mentioning Ishvara Pranidhana, Patanjali seems to express an open-hearted and broad-minded approach, as if saying, "Follow the path that suits you best." He explains that enlightenment can also be attained through devotion to God, surrender, and a deep, loving connection.

According to the Upanishads, Ishvara represents collective consciousness. In yoga, the concept of God is not perceived as a supreme being sitting on a throne somewhere above, ruling the universe. Instead, Ishvara is the ultimate reality that individuals seek to attain.

In yoga, when a person's individual consciousness expands and merges with universal consciousness, this is called self-realization. The individual, while remaining unique, becomes aware of the existence of the whole.

The Upanishads, which form the foundation of yoga, aim to guide the student step by step toward truth, fostering self-awareness and an understanding of their mystical connection with the universe through various methods.

Patanjali, in the 20th sutra, emphasized the importance of enthusiastic and faithful practice. Expanding on this, Shivananda, in his commentary on the Narada Bhakti Yoga Sutras, writes: "Without knowledge, faith cannot be firm; without firm faith, one cannot develop devotion to God; and without devotion, surrender and true dedication are impossible."

In Chapter 18, Verse 65 of the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna says to his disciple Arjuna: "Think of me, serve me. Worship me, surrender yourself to me. Then, without a doubt, you will reach me. I give you this promise with all sincerity, for you are my dearest friend."

In the Bhagavad Gita, Bhakti Yoga is emphasized greatly and even presented as the most powerful path. It is also a path that Patanjali embraces and even integrates with Ashtanga Yoga.

Sutra 1.24

Klesha karma vipaka asayaih apamrstah purushavisheshah ishvarah

Klesha: Painful thought and emotion forms, obstacles, negative influences occupying the mind

Karma: Action

Vipaka: Result

Asayaih: Traces left by past actions, deep imprints of desires and intentions

Apamrstah: Unaffected

Purushaviseshah: A special being

Ishvarah: The creative source, pure consciousness, Purusha, the supreme guru

Ishvara is the supreme consciousness. It is completely unaffected by karma, meaning it remains untouched by suffering, the consequences of actions, and the deep imprints left by desires and intentions.

All suffering arises from ignorance, and ignorance stems from the sense of "I." The greater a person's ego, the more they are exposed to pain and sorrow. The stronger the ego, the more karma is created.

In all forms of yoga, especially in Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga, the refinement and eventual dissolution of the ego are emphasized. The previous sutra spoke of devotion and surrender to Ishvara. In that state, a person opens their will to the higher will. The goal is oneness—to be fully unified.

At this stage, there is an unquestioning acceptance of all events and situations in life. The need for analyzing, questioning, or interpreting has been left behind.

What does this kind of acceptance lead to? It leads to the dissolution of karma and the cessation of creating new karma. For an action to generate karma, it must be driven by an intention rooted in self-interest, which comes from the ego. Likewise, for the consequences of an action to return, there must be a self, for them to return to. It is the sense of self that creates both actions and karma. When the sense of "I" disappears, when the self is no longer there, karma also ceases to exist.

When this is understood, it becomes clear why Ishvara is completely independent of karma and its consequences. Ishvara is eternal and infinite. Unlike humans, it has no birth or death dates, no beginning, and no end.

Sutra 1.25

Tatra niratisayam sarvajna bijam

Tatra: There, in that, on this path

Niratisayam: Unsurpassable, incomparable

Sarvajna: All knowledge, omniscience

Bijam: Seed

He is the one who knows all things. The seed of all knowledge lies within him.

Yoga teaches how to calm the mind and make it capable of focus. Perception must open and expand. Such perception is necessary to grasp knowledge. All beings possess knowledge to some degree. Great gurus, yogis, and sacred figures hold vast knowledge.

What is the source of this knowledge, and where does it reside? Ishvara is the source of all knowledge, the absolute consciousness

As meditation deepens and perception expands, contact with the source of knowledge increases. It is important to note that the source of knowledge is pure intelligence, and pure intelligence is pure sattva. As a person's intellect becomes purified and sattva spreads, their perception and understanding also change. Knowledge then becomes comprehensible to them.

Even if we have not yet directly reached the source of knowledge, yoga practice helps us sense its existence and shows us the way to reach it.

Sutra 1.26

Sa eshah purvesham api guruh kalena anavacchedat

Sa: This, that

Eshah: Purusha, God, soul, Ishvara

Purvesham: First, first of all

Api: Also, furthermore, in addition, even

Guruh: Teacher

Kalena: Time

Anavacchedat: Unlimited, timeless, unconditional

He is the teacher who is not bound by time and encompasses all times.

The difference between Ishvara and the enlightened gurus is that while gurus attain freedom through their own discipline and effort, Ishvara is already limitless, infinite, and all-knowing.

Knowledge has been passed down for centuries through the teacher-student lineage. Ishvara is the teacher of all teachers. The word guru means "the one who brings light to darkness." A guru is essential for lifting the veil of ignorance and reaching knowledge. According to Patanjali, Ishvara is the guru of all gurus.

Ishvara is not bound by time. He is beyond time, eternal, and infinite. For enlightened beings, time also disappears, because their inner light is timeless. The experience of enlightenment is an experience of timelessness. Time is created by thought, and thought is a product of the mind. However, to be free from thought and to surrender completely (Ishvara pranidhana) is the experience of enlightenment. When thought is suspended, time is also suspended.

Sutra 1.27

Tasya vacakah pranavah

Tasya: His, its

Vacakah: Sound symbol, expression

Pranavah: The supreme sound, the divine vibration, OM

He expresses himself through the sound of pranava (OM).

Words and thoughts are inseparable. Words are external, while thoughts are internal. Both are different forms of the same concept. A concept turns into a thought, and that thought transforms into a word or speech.

Every human society has a language, and in these languages, the same concepts are expressed with different words. There are many words used to describe the concept of God, but the sound OM appears in many languages in forms such as Amin or Amen.

What is special about the syllable OM?

The sound OM in Sanskrit is composed of the sounds A-U-M.

A is the root sound. When pronounced, it does not touch any part of the mouth. It is the sound of the beginning.

U rolls from the root and is placed in the middle of the mouth. The combination of A and U is pronounced as O.

M is the final sound. To produce it, the lips must be closed.

In this form, the sound OM represents beginning, continuation, and ending, symbolizing creation. It indicates that everything created follows a process.

In this sense, OM expresses the beginning of creation. Creation begins with the sound of OM. As stated in the Bible, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Pranava is related to prana. Prana is the fundamental vibration. In other words, the sum of all energies existing in the universe is defined as prana. It never disappears. This fundamental vibration should be considered as the first manifestation of God. All creation has emerged from it and will eventually return to it.

Sutra 1.28

Tajjapah tadarthabhavanam

Tat: His, their

Japah: To murmur softly, to repeat, to chant

Artha: Meaning, purpose

Bhavanam: To understand, to contemplate, to meditate

A person should continuously repeat OM and meditate upon it.

OM should be repeated and meditated upon. However, these repetitions should not become mechanical or empty. The repetition can be done aloud, in a whisper, or silently.

India's famous poet Swami Rama Tirtha says: "Within the meaning of OM lies the reality behind the stage. The infinite truth, the unchanging self, the real you... When the sacred mantra OM is chanted, the intellect is cast aside, and the true self within the body emerges. This is to become one with Atman. Understand OM and speak it with the language of feeling... Speak it through action, speak it through every pore of your body. Let it pulse in your chest like a heartbeat. Let every drop of blood in your body wash over you with the truth that you are the light of all lights."

Sutra 1.29

Tatah pratyak chetana adhigamah api antaraya abha- vah cha

Tatah: Therefore, as a result, thus, consequently

Pratyak: Turning inward, introspection

Chetana: Consciousness

Adhigamah: To attain, to gain
Api: Also, additionally, furthermore, even
Antaraya: Obstacle, hindrance
Abhavah: Disappearance, removal, dissolution
Cha: And

Through this practice, the ability for inner observation is attained, and the obstacles on the path disappear.

In the Yoga Sutras, Patanjali presents many techniques and methods for turning inward, calming the mind, and cultivating inner observation. One of these practices is the one described above. When obstacles to progress are removed, the barriers preventing a person from reaching their true essence also disappear.

Samskara is the sum of all impressions a person has accumulated throughout their lifetimes. These impressions are stored in different layers of the mind and influence a person's actions. Through various spiritual practices, these samskaras can be refined and lightened. However, they still remain, and when the right conditions arise, they can surface and shape a person's life.

These mental impressions do not simply disappear on their own. Even when the universe ceases to exist, when the Sun, Moon, and stars dissolve into one another and vanish, the vibrations within their atoms will still remain in a potential form.

Therefore, even if chitta is transcended, the old samskaras still remain. Through continuous repetition of the OM mantra and meditation on OM, these samskaras are purified.

Sutra 1.30

Vyadhi styana samsaya pramada alasya avirati bh- rantidarsana alabdha bhumikatva anavasthitatva chitta vikshepa te antarayah

Vyadhi: Illness, physical ailments
Styana: Mental laziness
Samsaya: Doubt
Pramada: Negligence, carelessness, indifference
Alasya: Laziness
Avirati: Attachment to worldly pleasures
Bhrantidarsana: Delusion, misperception, illusion
Alabdha bhumikatva: Lack of awareness of achievements, drifting away from the goal
Anavasthitatva: Inability to maintain progress, lack of perseverance, instability
Chitta vikshepa: Mental distraction, confusion, scattered mind
Te: These
Antarayah: Obstacles

Illness, laziness, doubt, indifference, attachment to the world, delusion, instability, and the feeling of unable to reach the desired level, create confusion in the mind. This, in turn, becomes an obstacle to progress in yoga.

Let's take a closer look at the conditions mentioned above that create obstacles to yoga, one by one.

1. Vyadhi – Physical illness: The foundation of everything is having a healthy body. Physical ailments manifest similarly in a person's breath and mind. The body is the vehicle that carries a person through life. Therefore, having a healthy body is extremely valuable.

2. Styana – Mental laziness: Mental laziness and dullness are obstacles to continuing yoga practice and must be overcome. This is challenging and is likely a karmic condition carried over from a previous life. A person affected by this lives in a state of mental fog, far from understanding what is truly happening around them.

3. Samsaya – Doubt: Progress on the spiritual path requires absolute faith in the path one follows. Some people try many different paths and methods, showing a little interest in each. When this happens, both their interest and knowledge remain superficial. This prevents them from deepening on the path to liberation.

4. Pramada – Indifference: Neglect and carelessness are tamasik states. With such a mindset, progress is not possible—not only in yoga but in any area of life.

5. Alasya – Physical Laziness: While pramada manifests as mental neglect, alasya appears as laziness in the physical body. In the Yoga Vasistha, Vasistha says to Rama: "Whatever has been achieved in this world has been gained through personal effort. If one faces failure, it is due to a lack of effort. If laziness did not exist, no one would be imprisoned by limitations or live in poverty. In this world, people suffer and remain in poverty because of laziness."

6. Avirati – Attachment to the worldly: Worldly pleasures create attachment and dependency. The desires of such, never end. As a result, their minds remain constantly occupied with the external world and are always restless.

7. Bhrantidarsana – Delusion: Some people see visions or hear sounds during their practice. These extraordinary experiences excite and surprise them so much that they believe they have made significant progress. Such mystical states can inflate a person's ego or cause them to become attached to their perceived abilities.

8. Alabdha bhūmikatva – The feeling of not reaching the desired level: This may stem from a lack of self-confidence or impatience. If a person believes they are not where they want to be, they may neglect their practice instead of continuing with determination.

9. Anavasthitatva – Inability to maintain progress: Just as life has ups and downs, the same applies to yoga practice. A person must recognize their current level, whatever it may be, and continue their practice with faith and commitment.

Patanjali warns the students to observe themselves carefully and remain aware of these obstacles, staying vigilant on the path.

Sutra 1.31

Duhkha daurmanasya angamejayatva svasa prasvasa vikshepa sahabhuvah

Duhkha: Pain (physical or mental)

Daurmanasya: Unhappiness, depression, hopelessness

Angamejayatva: Trembling, shaking, tics

Svasa prasvasa: Irregularities in breathing (inhale and exhale)

Vikshepa: Disorder, disturbance

Sahabhuvah: To unite, to be associated with

These nine conditions that hinder progress in yoga, lead to various disturbances such as pain, unhappiness, trembling, tics, and irregularities in breathing.

Based on the above indicators, it can be said that the person has a weak and unfocused mind. Concentration means holding prana firmly in one place, bringing it under control.

It is well known that there is a direct relationship between physical and mental disturbances. If the flow of prana is scattered and irregular, it affects both the body and the mind.

Sutra 1.32

Tat pratishedhartham eka tattva abhyasah

Tat: His, their

Pratishedha: To prevent, to set right

Artham: For this purpose

Eka: One, single

Tattva: Principle

Abhyasah: Regular practice

To prevent these obstacles and the disturbances that follow, one must consistently practice the principle of focusing on a single point.

To prevent the symptoms mentioned in Sutras 30 and 31, or to resolve existing issues, one must continue practicing training the mind to focus on a single point.

Patanjali further clarifies the concept of focus in this sutra. Focusing on a single point does not mean choosing a different object each day. Instead, each person should select an object that suits their nature and concentrate solely on that object for a certain period.

Only in this way does the mind move beyond the surface and develop the ability to focus deeply. The principle of focusing on a single point is very important in the beginning. Through this practice, disturbances in the everyday mind are eliminated, the mind is relaxed, and it becomes more sensitive and sharper. When a person reaches this level, they are ready for meditation.

It is important to remember the significance of abhyasa (continuous practice) and vairagya (detachment), as mentioned in Sutra 12 of this section. Without the practice of abhyasa and vairagya, concentration exercises alone are not sufficient.

Sutra 1.33

Maitri karuna mudita upekshanam sukha duhkha punya apunya vishayanam bhavanatah chitta prasadanam

Maitri: Friendship

Karuna: Compassion

Mudita: Joy, goodwill

Upekshanam: Acceptance, impartiality

Sukha: Happiness

Duhkha: Suffering, unhappiness

Punya: Virtuous, good

Apunya: Non-virtuous, bad

Vishayanam: According to these qualities

Bhavanatah: By developing a habit

Chitta: Mind, consciousness (the domain that includes thoughts, emotions, memories, intellect, and ego)

Prasadanam: Pure, peaceful, calm

Developing the habit of responding with friendship toward the happy, compassion toward those who suffer, goodwill and appreciation toward the virtuous, and neutrality and detachment toward the ill-intentioned and non-virtuous, brings calmness to the mind.

In this sutra, Patanjali suggests a method for calming the mind through human relationships. Instead of envying happy people, approach them with friendship. Instead of giving advice to those who suffer, show them compassion. Rather than criticizing the virtuous and enlightened, respond with goodwill and appreciation. And do not engage with ill-intentioned or non-virtuous individuals—maintain neutrality and distance.

Tracking emotions and thoughts throughout the day can be considered a form of meditation. Emotions and thoughts shape behaviors. Therefore, it is very important to regulate and transform them into positive ones. However, this may not always be easy. Becoming aware of societal value judgments and ingrained thought patterns and overcoming them, requires effort. In challenging moments, it is helpful to remind our mind : "Your job is not to create problems for me, but to help me overcome them. My path is yoga. Every negative thought creates an obstacle on my path."

In some meditation schools, techniques for positive thinking are taught. This is an inner practice. Transforming the negative into the positive and making positive thinking a way of life is essential for spiritual growth.

As mentioned before, the mind can be trained. Just as a small child can be taught what is right and wrong, how to love, and how to share, the mind can be trained in the same way.

Sutra 1.34

Pracchardana vidharanabhyam va pranasya

Pracchardana: To exhale

Vidharanabhyam: To control, to regulate

Va: Or

Pranasya: Through prana, of prana

Or, by regulating prana through holding the breath after exhalation, the mind can also be calmed.

By holding the breath for a while after exhalation, the mind can be calmed. This duration should be one in which the person naturally holds their breath without discomfort. While inhalation revitalizes and fills the person with energy, exhalation relaxes and soothes. Holding the breath after exhalation deepens the effect created by the act of exhaling.

This is a simple practice, but it is highly effective for creating calmness in the mind. The key point to be mindful of here is that while practicing, the mind should remain focused on the breath, without allowing it to wander. It is expected that the person follows the process of inhaling, exhaling, and holding the breath with attention and awareness.

Sutra 1.35

Vishayavati va pravrtti utpanna manasah sthiti nibandhani

Vishayavati: Sensory experiences

Va: Or

Pravrtti: Higher perception

Utpanna: To arise, to appear

Manasa: Mental

Sthiti: Firm, stable

Nibandhani: To settle firmly

Deep concentration on sensory experiences leads a person to higher levels of perception. This also ensures that the mind becomes strong and stable.

This is not about focusing on the findings obtained through the five senses. It goes beyond focusing on images, smells, or sounds and instead speaks of focusing on the sensations themselves, such as seeing, smelling, and hearing. It is about increasing awareness of the source of the senses, working to focus not on the surface or the known, but on the deeper levels—essentially, it is about diving into the roots of the senses.

"What is the smell? Why do I smell? What do unknown smells make me feel? Is the smell limited to just my nose?"

"What is touch? What do I feel when I touch? What am I expressing through touch? They say love is touch—Is that true? Do I touch with my eyes? Do I touch with my words?"

"What is seeing? Do I only see the material world? Is light always necessary? Is a certain distance required? What does it mean to see with the heart? Have I ever tried looking around with my heart's eye? They say the third eye—what must it be like to see with it?"

While performing these practices, it is recommended that the person live in silence and observe a yoga fast. The topic of focusing on the senses is explained in detail in Chapter 3 of the book.

Sutra 1.36

Vishoka va jyotishmati

Vishoka: Freedom from suffering, the radiant light where there is no pain

Va: Or

Jyotishmati: The light shining in the mind and heart

Or, by meditating on the radiant light, one can transcend suffering.

The light in this sutra refers to the light of the heart. According to the Upanishads, the source of the mind and perception is the heart. The lotus of the heart is where pure intelligence resides. Meditating on the lotus of the heart, which shines as light, calms the mind.

The Chandogya Upanishad says: "The body is a city with a heart. This is the home of Brahman. Brahman resides in this lotus-shaped home. Whatever exists in the macrocosm also exists in the microcosm of the heart. Even when old age arrives, the lotus of the heart continues to shine. Because Brahman resides not in the decaying body, but in the lotus of the heart."

The light shining from the lotus of the heart expresses the true essence of the person. It is beyond the realms of pain and suffering because pain arises from the ego. Concepts such as "my thoughts," "my body," "my life" lead to sadness and disappointment. Focusing on the heart and feeling its light draws the person beyond the sense of self, bringing relaxation and calming the mind.

Sutra 1.37

Vita raga vishayam va chittam

Vita: Liberated, freed

Raga: Desires, passions

Vishayam: Objects

Va: Or

Chittam: Mind, consciousness

Or, meditation can be done on a mind that is free from desires.

Feeling the heart of an enlightened sage who inspires and affects a person, and meditating to grasp that essence, calms the mind. Just as a student feels an absolute sense of peace when near their guru, they can create the same feeling by thinking of them. Today, encountering such a sage is not easy, but through meditation, feeling the hearts and minds of those who have come before us, whose teachings we know, helps to calm the mind.

A yogi, who visited the Dalai Lama, asked the great master, who was living in exile, about the invasion, the hostility towards Buddhism. The Dalai Lama, smiled and simply said, "This too shall pass." Even in such difficult circumstances, he was living in serene and peaceful state of mind, Trying to understand his mind, will calm one's own mind.

Sutra 1.38

Svapna nidra jnana alambanam va

Svapna: Dream

Nidra: Sleep state

Jnana: Knowledge

Alambanam: To support, to assist

Va: Or

Or, meditation can be done on the knowledge that comes through dreams during the sleep state.

In primitive tribes, where the mind is either not yet corrupted or used relatively little, great value was placed on the information received in dreams.

Remembering the knowledge that comes in dreams and meditating on it, is helpful both for strengthening the knowledge and for calming the mind.

Sutra 1.39

Yatha abhimata dhyanat va

Yatha: Whatever happens

Abhimata: Desire, personal wish

Dhyanat: Through meditation

Va: Or

Or, meditation can also be done on any different object one likes.

In the previous sutras, Patanjali had suggested various concrete or abstract objects for the student to meditate on. These were topics that needed focus, suitable for developing the student. Now, however, the master is letting the student go. "Focus on whatever makes you happy." he says.

Of course, this does not refer to material pleasures that would further bind a person to the external world and disturb the mind. It is important to remember that the goal is to calm the mind, increase focus, and open the path to freedom.

Sutra 1.40

Paramanu paramamahattva antah asya vasikarah

Paramanu: The smallest, atom, micro

Paramamahattva: The greatest, maximum, macro

Antah: Opened

Asya: His, hers, belonging to him/her

Vasikarah: To be powerful, to be strong

Through meditation, the mind becomes so strong that it can easily focus on any topic, from the smallest to the largest.

Thus, through meditation, one becomes capable of meditating on any subject, from the smallest particle, the elemental level, to the largest, the vastness of the cosmos. With a mind focused on a single point, all the knowledge of that object is obtained. This leads to complete control of thought and ultimately to samadhi.

Sutra 1.41

Kshina vrtteh abhijatasya iva maneh grahitri grahana grahyeshu tatstha tadanjanata samapattih

Kshina: To dissolve, to melt

Vrtteh: Waves of the mind

Abhijatasya: Transparent, pure, clear

Iva: Like

Maneh: Jewel, crystal

Grahitri: The knower, the perceiver

Grahana: Perception, knowledge

Grahyeshu: The perceived, the known

Tatstha: To become stable

Tadanjanata: To take on the form, color, or nature of the perceived or known

Samapattih: Complete unification, identification, merging, coming together

Just as the shape and color of an object behind a clear crystal are visible, a purified mind reflects the object it focuses on in the same way.

So much so that the mind of the person meditating and the object of meditation seem to be one and the same.

This state is called samapatti.

The state that emerges from the union of the meditator, the act of meditating, and the meditation object is called samadhi. In this state, the mind becomes so purified that, just as a mirror reflects the image falling upon it exactly as it is, the mind reflects the meditation object in the same way.

This state of oneness is the state of samadhi. Samapatti is the balance and peace that naturally arise as a result of samadhi. In samapatti, the mind is clear, not influenced by personal biases and external world dissolves

Sutra 1.42

Tatra sabda artha jnana vikalpaih sankirna savitarka samapattih

Tatra: There, in that, on this path

Shabda: Word, sound

Artha: Meaning

Jnana: Knowledge, idea

Vikalpaih: Possibilities

Sankirna: To come together, to merge

Sa: With

Vitarka: The concrete, material form of objects, tangible objects

Samapattih: Complete unification, identification, merging, coming together

Savitarka samapatti is the state of knowledge that arises from the union of an object's name, meaning, and knowledge.

In concentration practices, we have seen that the process begins with concrete forms and abstract concepts to train the mind.

Sa means with Savitarka refers to the object with its meaning. During meditation, when focusing on a form, all the information related to that form in the memory comes to the surface, along with the name of the form. As mentioned in the previous sutra, when the mind is as clear as a crystal, the knowledge of the object being meditated upon becomes clearer. This is when one reaches the essence of the knowledge. This is called savitarka samapatti. It is a questioning samapatti, and it is a method used to learn the truth of objects and guide the mind to higher states of samadhi.

A student focused on the wind will first begin to feel it. Is it cold or warm? Which direction is it coming from? Is it strong or gentle? All the information stored in their memory about the wind will surface, and the meaning of the wind will flow into their mind from their memories, knowledge, and experiences. As the concentration continues, at some point, all these pieces of information, emotions, and sensations will fade, and the mind becomes pure and clear regarding the wind. What is felt is simply the wind as it is.

Sutra 1.43

Smrti parisuddhau svarupa sunya iva artha matra nirbhasa nirvitarka

Smrti: Memory, awareness, remembrance

Parisuddhau: To purify, to cleanse

Svarupa: One's true essence

Sunya: Void, emptiness

Iva: As it is

Artha: True meaning

Matra: Only

Nirbhasa: Reflection, manifestation, appearing as it is

Nirvitarka: Without concrete forms (transcendence, beyond)

When the memory is completely purified, in the space that arises, the self and objects appear as they truly are, in their real meaning.

When the memory is completely purified, the mind, when encountering an object, no longer brings up feedback or memories from the past. The mind returns to its unbiased, unconditioned state, its true nature. Thus, objects appear in the mind in their pure form, as they truly are.

Let's say the temperature outside is 15 degrees. For someone coming from the north, this temperature feels mild, while someone from the south might feel cold. What does this mean? It means that people don't perceive the external world as it is, but rather through the lens of their own conditions.

Subjectivity, prejudice, and personal judgment are present everywhere, at all times, and for everything. While people go about their daily lives, the impressions coming from the subconscious mind play a significant role. All life impressions (samskaras) and karmic traces are stored in the subconscious and govern the person.

Like a puppet being moved on stage, everyone shapes their life with the strings of their subconscious impressions. In the state of savitarka samapatti, when the name of an object arises, the subconscious comes into play and influences the meaning given to that object. In nirvitarka samapatti, however, the subconscious has been purified, so when an object arises, it simply exists as it is. Everything is just as it is, as it truly is. Thus, everything is original, pure, innocent, and new.

This pure and light state has now illuminated the path to liberation. The person must be aware of this, not get stuck here, and continue on the path.

So, when and how is the purification of memory possible? In sutra 41, it was mentioned that the mind becomes as transparent as a crystal. The process begins here. In this state, tamas and rajas completely vanish. All emotions belonging to the lower self, such as greed, anger, arrogance, pride, hate, etc., disappear.

The being begins to relate to the external world through the guidance of its true nature, now guided by inner wisdom. The meditation of the yogi, now face-to-face with pure reality, love, and intuition, has completely transformed.

Sutra 1.44

Etayaiva savichara nirvichara cha sukshma vishaya vyakhyata

Etayaiva: With this

Savichara: With abstract concepts

Nirvichara: Without abstract concepts (transcendence, beyond)

Cha: And

Sukshma: So subtle, fine, beyond the comprehension of the five senses

Vishaya: Objects, things

Vyakhyata: To explain, to make understandable

Meditation, where abstract concepts are transcended and left behind, is similar to meditation with abstract concepts.

Earlier, focusing on concrete forms and abstract concepts was discussed in sequence. The higher level, where even abstract topics are left behind, is nirvichara. Here, even abstract and verbal concepts are withdrawn and extinguished.

The technique of this meditation practice is the same as that of meditation with abstract concepts; it is as simple and clear as that.

Sutra 1.45

Sukshma vishayatvam cha alinga paryavasanam

Sukshma: So subtle, fine, beyond the comprehension of the five senses

Vishayatvam: Perceived objects, things

Cha: And

Alinga: Not yet manifested, entirely conceptual

Paryavasanam: In the end

Meditation on the finest form of the perceived object, leads to a state where even concepts have not yet formed.

According to Samkhya philosophy, the universe arises from Prakriti, the potential state of creation. One can think of Prakriti as, being before the Big Bang Theory. According to this philosophy, Prakriti gives rise, in sequence, to cosmic intelligence, individual intelligence, and then Asmita, or the ego. Following this, the elements of ether, air, fire, water, and earth emerge, along with the senses associated with these elements. With the formation of the physical body, the sensory organs also arise.

As mentioned, meditation begins with concrete forms perceived through the sensory organs. Then, as meditation deepens with focus on finer concepts like the senses and the ego, it leads the person

to their source. Here, one goes beyond forms, names, meanings, and everything related to existence, reaching Prakriti itself.

Sutra 1.46

Ta eva sabijah samadhi

Ta: These

Eva: Only

Sabijah: Having a seed, having an object

Samadhi: Deep meditation, the state of oneness, complete unification, merging

These are samadhis that are reached by connecting to a seed, an object.

The state of samadhi, if it occurs with an external object, which can be either concrete or abstract, is called sabija (with an object, having a seed) samadhi. Here, even though it is subtle, subconscious impressions (samskaras) still exist. These samskaras can generate desires and create new karmas.

Sutra 1.47

Nirvichara vaisharadye adhyatma prasadah

Nirvichara: Without an object, without a seed, transcendence of perception

Vaisharadye: Attaining absolute purity

Adhyatma: The true self, spiritual self

Prasadah: Brightness, enlightenment

The mind, which reaches absolute purity with nirvichara samadhi, is enlightened by the light of the spiritual self, or the true self.

The samadhi without a seed is nirvichara samadhi (without an object). Here, one goes beyond even the subconscious realms. This means the disappearance of the worldly "I" sense.

Just as the stars disappear when the sun rises, when the mind is illuminated by the brilliance of the essence, the shadow of the false self vanishes, and the person encounters their true self. This is what is meant by "self-knowledge, self-discovery."

Sutra 1.48

Rtambhara tatra prajna

Rtam: The truth, reality (reached through deep meditation and samadhi)

Bhara: To carry

Tatra: There, in that, on this path

Prajna: Consciousness, insight

The consciousness experienced in the state of samadhi carries the light of truth within it.

Reading sacred texts makes a person knowledgeable. But to reach the light of truth, one must meditate. In this sutra, the word "rtam" is used to express truth. Rtam refers to the reality reached through deep meditation and samadhi. Knowing something theoretically is one thing, but learning through experience is another. Learning the Vedas is, of course, good, but to grasp the truth, one must personally experience the practices recommended there.

Yoga talks about going beyond these limitations. A person carries the potential to go beyond the mind in their essence. Through yoga practices, one gains access to this power. Only then can a person surpass ordinary limits and reach direct perception that transcends the questions of "why" and "how."

Sutra 1.49

Shruta anumana praj nabhyam anyavishaya visesha arthatvat

Shruta: Listening, hearing

Anumana: Inference, reasoning

Praj nabhyam: Wisdom coming from insight

Anyava: Different

Vishaya: Objects, things

Vishesha: Different, having characteristics, specific

Arthatvat: Purpose, goal

The knowledge we gain through hearing can only take us so far. The knowledge obtained through samadhi is a completely different kind of knowledge.

Through research, a person can become an expert in a particular field. However, this expertise pertains to worldly matters. The subtle understanding of something cannot be reached with the limited capabilities of the mind. We cannot grasp God and the soul with the mind.

Sutra 1.50

Tajjah samskara anyava samskara pratibandhi

Tajjah: Born from it, born from the light of truth

Samskara: Deep impressions in the mind, subconscious impressions

Anyava samskara: Other samskaras

Pratibandhi: To prevent, to obstruct

Samskaras born from the light of truth obstruct the other (previous) samskaras.

People who practice concentration will notice that whenever they sit to focus, unwanted thoughts and memories emerge from somewhere, their origin unclear. All of these are the result of previous samskaras.

The state of samadhi has a powerful subconscious cleansing effect. As one continues the practice without fatigue, new samskaras are created through the light of truth that emerges. These newly created samskaras prevent the old ones from surfacing.

Sutra 1.51

Tasyapi nirodhe sarva nirodhat nirbijah samadhi

Tasyapi: Even this

Nirodhe: Withdrawal

Sarva: All, everything

Nirodhat: To come to an end, to be erased

Nirbijah: Without seed, without object

Samadhi: Deep meditation, the state of oneness, complete unification, merging

The object is erased, and all impressions vanish. The state of objectless, seedless samadhi (nirbija samadhi) arises.

In the previous sutra, the state of easily merging with a single topic without any obstacles was mentioned. In this sutra, however, it describes a state where that single topic also naturally dissolves, and there is no longer an object remaining.

When everything related to creation is erased, the soul itself emerges into the light of day. The thought "I am this body" completely disappears. As one progresses in samadhi, and as the boundaries of the mind expand, the sense of "I" changes, diminishes, and fades. In the end, what remains is the soul itself. "I am That" is nirbija samadhi or asamprajnata samadhi.

Practices for Spiritual Growth

Sutra 2.1

Tapah svadhyaya Ishvara pranidhanani kriya yogah

Tapas (tapah): Self-discipline practiced for spiritual growth, burning effort

Svadhyaya: Studying sacred texts and working on the self

Ishvara: Creative source, pure consciousness, Purusha, the supreme guru

Pranidhanani: Devotion, surrender

Kriya: 1. Action, 2. Purification, cleansing

Yogah: To be one, union

Self-discipline, studying sacred texts, and surrendering to the supreme will...

These purification practices are called Kriya Yoga.

Tapas means self-discipline practiced for spiritual growth. Yoga is a practice based on personal effort and self-discipline. Many people complain about not being disciplined enough, but patience is essential. As one progresses in yoga, their faith and discipline naturally increase.

Svadhyaya is the study of ancient and profound teachings to understand oneself and the universe. Yoga Sutras, Bhagavad Gita, the Vedas and Upanishads, Brahma Sutras, and other sacred texts are invaluable sources of knowledge. These scriptures are studied by listening, reading, and meditating upon them. They are not intellectual but spiritual knowledge. Their purpose is not to make a person knowledgeable but to guide them toward wisdom.

Ishvara pranidhana is surrendering to the flow of the universe and to God.

Creation, in all its forms, is sacred and perfect. A person's actions should align with this understanding, choosing the highest path in their deeds, thus harmonizing with the sacredness of life and becoming a part of it.

As a person's consciousness expands and begins to perceive the collective consciousness, their relationship with life and with God transforms. They start living with sincerity and devotion. Reaching the point of "Let Your will be my will," they open their hands and release everything they have been holding onto. They become light, joyful, and free.

Without tapas, there can be no svadhyaya, and without svadhyaya, Ishvara pranidhana cannot be realized. They are all closely related and interconnected. Patanjali defines the practice of these three together as Kriya Yoga.

Sutra 2.2

Samadhi bhavanarthah klesha tanukaranarthah cha

Samadhi: The state of oneness through deep meditation, complete unification, merging

Bhavana: To create, to bring forth

Arthah: Purpose, aim

Klesha: Painful thought and emotion patterns, obstacles, negative mental afflictions

Tanu: To weaken, to reduce

Karanarthah: For the purpose of

Cha: And

Kriya Yoga practices, undertaken with the aim of attaining samadhi, weaken and reduce the painful patterns present in the mind.

In the first chapter of the Patanjali Sutras, many methods for attaining samadhi were suggested, and the nature of samadhi was explained. Here, the Kriya Yoga method is introduced as a path to achieving samadhi.

The practice of tapas, svadhyaya, and Ishvara pranidhana may be an easier method compared to concentration exercises. Through discipline, self-study, and aligning their existence with the existence of the universe, a person creates the opportunity to purify their mind to such an extent that they can reach samadhi in this way.

There are certain passions and deeply ingrained thought patterns that chain a person to the world and root them in the material realm. These also lead to suffering and cause one to become lost in the vast ocean of worldly existence.

Sutra 2.3

Avidya asmita raga dvesha abhiniveshah kleshah

Avidya: Ignorance, lack of true knowledge (one's misunderstanding of life and oneself)

Asmita: Ego, sense of self, forgetting one's spiritual identity

Ragah: Attachment to what is loved or desired

Dvesha: Aversion, rejection, hatred

Abhiniveshah: Fear of death, clinging to life

Kleshah: Painful thought and emotional patterns, obstacles, afflictions that disturb the mind

The causes of a person's suffering are as follows: ignorance, ego, the pursuit of worldly desires, strong aversion to certain worldly conditions, and the fear of death (clinging to life).

Patanjali has classified the causes of human suffering into five categories:

Avidya - Ignorance: Lack of true understanding about life and oneself.

Asmita - Ego: Misidentification of the self due to ignorance.

Ragah - Attachment to what is loved and suppose that these things bring happiness.

Dvesha - Aversion to what is unwanted: Suffering arises as one tries to avoid what they do not desire.

Abhinivesah - Fear of death and clinging to life.

It was stated that yoga is "chitta vritti nirodhah," meaning the withdrawal of mental fluctuations. The kleshas (afflictions) are what create these mental fluctuations, and eliminating the kleshas is possible through the practice of yoga.

Sutra 2.4

Avidya kshetram uttaresham prasupta tanu vicchinna udaranam

Avidya: Ignorance, lack of true knowledge (misunderstanding of life and oneself)

Kshetram: Place, position

Uttaresam: Order, sequence, following

Prasupta: Dormant, in a potential state

Tanu: Weakened, reduced, replaced by something else

Vicchinna: Distanced, separate, disconnected

Udaranam: Active, manifesting in action

Ignorance (avidya), which is the root of all suffering, exists in the mind in four different states. These states are as follows: dormant (potential), weakened, replaced by something else, and active.

1. Dormant state: Suffering that has not yet been experienced, not yet manifested, and remains in a waiting state.

2. Weakened state: While experiencing difficulties, a person may realize that suffering is not fate and begin to explore its causes and how to eliminate them. This awareness and effort help to reduce the intensity of suffering.

3. Replaced by something else: A person takes a step further by changing their thought patterns. They transform the negative into the positive. In this way, avidya (ignorance) gradually gives way to vidya (true knowledge).

4. Active state: Suffering constantly arises from different sources. The person is so deeply immersed in darkness that they are unable to recognize how or why these afflictions occur.

Sutra 2.5

Anitya asuci duhkha anatmasu nitya suci sukha atma khyatih avidya

Anitya: Impermanent, transient

Asuci: Impure, not pure

Duhkha: Suffering (physical or mental)

Anatmasu: Not the true self, not the real essence

Nitya: Eternal, everlasting

Suci: Pure

Sukha: Happiness, joy

Atma: Atman, one's divine essence, individual soul, true self, Purusha

Kyhatih: Appearing as it is, seeming to be

Avidya: Ignorance, lack of true knowledge (misunderstanding of life and oneself)

Ignorance is, mistaking the impermanent for the eternal, the impure for the pure, the painful for pleasure, and the non-self for the true self.

Vidya means knowledge that reveals the truth. When the prefix "a" is added, it turns into its opposite, avidya, meaning ignorance or lack of true knowledge. Both vidya and avidya are spiritual terms referring to knowledge about one's true essence. Avidya represents a state where the truth is concealed, much like a room remaining dark until the curtains are opened or the sun becoming visible only after the clouds disperse.

Ignorance is not the opposite of knowledge; it is merely its obstructed state. The thick veil of maya, the world of illusion, deceives both the eyes and the mind.

Even though it is known that everything is temporary and mortal, this truth is ignored in daily life. Emotions and thoughts are entirely subjective, yet a person perceives them as pure and absolute.

It is well known that, many pleasures eventually turn into pain, yet people continue to chase them.

A person instinctively knows that none of these fully define them, yet they identify themselves with their body, profession, homeland, family, and culture.

All of these are what yoga defines as ignorance (avidya).

Sutra 2.6

Drg darsana saktyoh ekatmata iva asmita

Drg: The power of consciousness

Darsana: The power of perception

Saktyoh: Capacity

Ekatmata: Identity

Iva: Like, as if

Asmita: Ego, sense of self

Ego is the mistaken belief, thinking all the things in the world of illusions are "I."

Asmita is the sense of self, or ego. Misidentification and the distortion of the "I" concept are among the causes of suffering

Since a person perceives the world through sensory organs, they also define themselves through reflections from the external world. Thoughts such as "I am poor," "I am alone," "I am famous," "I am beautiful," or "I am ugly" are all based on external perceptions. However, all these definitions stand on unstable ground because the external world is inherently in constant change.

This change is inevitable, and the thought that everything will eventually slip away beyond one's control, can lead to tension, fear, and even emotions like anger or pride.

As Yunus Emre said, "There is a self within me, deeper than myself." If a person reaches this point, then life and the mind open up. This is a place of safety and happiness.

For a person to identify themselves with what is unchanging, infinite, pure, and sacred means finding their true identity.

Sutra 2.7

Sukha anusayi ragah

Sukha: Happiness

Anusayi: Clinging, attachment

Ragah: Attachment

Pleasurable things bind a person to themselves.

When a person derives pleasure and happiness from something, they want to experience it again and again. With each experience, they seek to relive the pleasure they previously felt. Consequently, over time, the intensity of the object of pleasure increases.

For example, drug addicts gradually require higher doses. Businessmen seek to expand their enterprises, and dictators strive to widen their domains of control. Moreover, even the mere thought of being separated from a source of pleasure or happiness can bring distress. In short, worldly pleasures can unexpectedly transform into pain and sorrow.

This sutra, like the previous one, is also a reflection of ignorance. The more a person seeks happiness externally, the further they drift from their own essence. This is "ragah." Ragah is becoming attached to things that bring pleasure and then suffering because of that attachment.

This sutra does not suggest avoiding things that bring happiness but rather emphasizes the importance of not becoming dependent on them. The issue is not happiness itself but the attachment to things that bring happiness.

Sutra 2.8

Dukha anusayi dvesha

Dukha: Pain

Anusayi: Attachment, clinging

Dvesha: Aversion, rejection, hatred

Avoiding and rejecting painful things is also an attachment.

Yoga speaks of a state of balance. It is necessary to free oneself from the pendulum of pleasure and pain and find equilibrium. In these sutras, Patanjali explains that both attraction and aversion are forms of attachment and cause suffering to the same extent.

Ragah (attachment) and dvesha (aversion) exist together like two sides of the same coin. The more ragah there is, the more dvesha follows. These two are among the fundamental causes of human suffering.

Describing beauty means accepting ugliness. Chasing wealth means running away from poverty. If there are things in life that bring pleasure and happiness, there will inevitably be their opposites as well. This is a natural reflection of the dualistic world.

There are many situations and people that a person wants to keep away from. As long as they are present in their life, the person suffers. The effort to stay away from unwanted things also exhausts the mind, and this is another face of dependency.

Rather than living in pain and misery, one should reduce the importance given to the things they avoid and approach life with the understanding that they, too, are temporary.

Sutra 2.9

Svarasavahi vidushah api tatha rudhah abhiniveshah

Svarasa: In a potential state

Vahi: Flowing

Vidusah: Wise person

Api: Also, likewise, even

Tatha: From that

Rudhah: Rooted

Abhinivesa: Fear of death, clinging to life

The fear of death and clinging to life is a deeply rooted feeling, even in wise individuals.

The fear of death is an instinctive and subconscious feeling not only in ordinary people but also in wise individuals. The experience of death, in different forms for all beings, is stored in the subconscious and transferred from one body to another.

In the 42nd sutra of Hatha Yoga Pradipika, Swami Muktibodhananda writes: "When prana begins to flow through the sushumna channel, the mind becomes calm. This state creates an environment for the individual to experience universal consciousness. When the individual soul merges with its source, individuality ceases to exist. Here, the thought of death disappears because non-existence has dissolved into existence."

Fear arises from duality. You are afraid when you are about to lose something. However, when you experience that, you are everything, neither ego nor fear remains.

Sutra 2.10

Te pratiprasava heyah sukshmah

Te: They

Pratiprasava: Regressing, returning to the time they were first created

Heyah: To eliminate, abandon, overcome

Sukshma: Subtle, too fine to be perceived by the five senses

These kleshas (afflictions, pains), which reside in the subconscious in their subtlest forms, can be eliminated by tracing them back to the time they were first created.

To recognize the kleshas and be freed from the suffering they cause, one must reach the root cause that created them. This is only possible through meditation.

As one progresses in meditation, they can penetrate their own depths and thus find the kleshas lying in potential form. When they follow these, they eventually encounter the ego. The root cause of all suffering is the ego, which arises from ignorance.

This sutra should be considered together with the next one.

Sutra 2.11

Dhyana heyas tad vrttayah

Dhyana: Meditation

Heyas: To eliminate, to abandon, to deal with

Tad: Its, their

Vrttayah: Plural of vritti, active thoughts and emotions in the mind

The active emotions and thoughts in the mind can be eliminated through meditation .

The kleshas (afflictions, pains) that hinder liberation may either exist in a potential state, as stated in the previous sutra, or in an active, manifest state, as mentioned here. When afflictions are active, it is easier to recognize and work on them.

All afflictions begin with separation from the universal essence, our true self, and with saying "I." The more the "I" diminishes, the lighter the afflictions become; the greater the "I," the stronger the afflictions. Through meditation, this false sense of self is dissolved and transformed back into its essence. This is the state of samadhi. With samadhi, the ego disappears, and all impressions belonging to the ego are also eliminated.

Sutra 2.12

Kleshamulah karmasayo drshta adrshta janma vedaniyah

Klesha: Forms that hinder liberation, afflictions

Mulah: Root

Karmasayo: The place where karmas are stored

Drshta: Visible

Adrshta: Invisible

Janma: Births

Vedaniyah: To experience

The roots of the kleshas are stored in the subconscious regions where karmas reside. Some of them are visible in this life, while others await to be experienced in future lives.

Here, a very important concept is introduced: Karma. The word karma carries two meanings: 1- Action, 2- The result of action.

You reap what you sow. In other words, you sow karma and reap karma. Every action creates a result, and every result leads to the next action.

It was previously mentioned that every experience leaves an imprint stored in the subconscious. These are the roots of karma. One comes into the world to experience a portion of the karma they have created. The rest of the karma remains stored, waiting to be experienced in future lives.

There are three types of karma:

- 1- Karmas being experienced in this life (Prarabdha karma)
- 2- New karmas created in this life (Agami karma)
- 3- Karmas stored in reserve to manifest in the future (Sanchita karma)

Patanjali grouped all experiences, whether pleasant or painful, under the five categories of kleshas. In this sutra, it is stated that kleshas create karmas, which are the causes of all lives. The origin and starting point of karmas are unknown. It is said that their source is infinity. Therefore, instead of getting stuck on an unanswerable question like "Why did this happen to me?" when faced with a situation, it is better to ask, "How can I best respond to this situation?" What matters is not what is experienced, but how it is experienced.

It is not possible to change what has already happened. Therefore, there is no choice but to accept what comes with maturity. When everything presented is accepted and experienced without resistance, the new karmas created can be turned into positive ones. In a sense, determining the direction of future karmas is in one's own hands. Good karmas lead to good and elevated lives. This is very important because an easier life, a gentle and pure existence, creates a more favorable environment for liberation.

Sutra 2.13

Sati mule tadvipako jatayayur bhogah

Sati: Existence, reality

Mule: Root

Tad: Its, their

Vipako: Ripening, bearing fruit

Jaty: Status in life, class, form

Ayur: Lifespan

Bhogah: Worldly experience

The karmas that arise due to kleshas determine in what form one will be reborn, the duration of that life, and the experiences to be lived.

Here, the philosophies of rebirth and karma are being unified.

When a person takes on a new body, it does not necessarily have to be in human form. Depending on the karma created, it is possible to be reborn in different forms.

The principle of life experiences existence through the body. Therefore, it is natural to choose the most suitable vehicle for the necessary experience. A fox form may provide an opportunity to experience cunning, a lion form is strength, and a dog form is loyalty.

The lifespan and the challenges faced in this life are also determined by karma. There is no escape from karma. Even if a person lives alone in a cave, both good and bad karma will still find them.

Everything we call luck or misfortune is, in fact, karma itself. This is why spiritual knowledge is so important. It has been stated that avidya, or ignorance, is the root of all suffering. One must face life's experiences with knowledge and wisdom. Understanding the continuity of life guides a person to sow good seeds in this lifetime.

Sutra 2.14

Te hlada paritapa phalah punya apunya hetutvat

Te: They

Hlada: Pleasurable

Phalah: Fruits, results

Punya: Virtue, moral merit

Apunya: Non-virtue, immoral

Hetutvat: Cause

Karmas, as a result of virtuous or non-virtuous actions, bring pleasure or suffering.

People create their own happy or unhappy lives. Everyone is the architect of their own life.

The philosophy of karma, which states "You reap what you sow," teaches that individuals are entirely responsible for their experiences. It is said that virtuous actions lead to happiness, while non-virtuous actions lead to suffering.

Can a person always be virtuous? What is non-virtue?

If a person prioritizes their own ego and arranges everything according to their pleasure and personal gain, this is non-virtue. "Do you perform an action for the sake of pleasure, or because it is the right thing to do?" The answer to this question is very important.

Morality should come from within a person, from his own consciousness.

Societies establish rules and prohibitions regarding morality and virtue. These are external restrictions. It can easily be said that prohibitions and punishments are not very effective by looking at crime rates.

Sutra 2.15

Parinama tapa samskara duhkaih guna vritti virdohat cha dukkham eva sarvam vivekinah

Parinama: Transformation

Tapa: Fire, pain, sorrow

Samskara: Deep-seated mental impressions, subconscious imprints

Duhkaih: Unhappiness

Guna: Energy, the force encompassing all qualities

Vrtti: Mental fluctuations

Virdohat: Complete opposition

Cha: And

Duhkam: Pain

Eva: Only, solely

Sarvam: Entire, whole

Vivekinah: Enlightened, wise person

The world is inherently in a state of constant transformation. A wise person who is aware of the gunas and subconscious impressions, knows that everything experienced, even happiness, will eventually turn into suffering.

This sutra conveys the knowledge of a profound philosophy on its own. If peace and happiness stem from what the external world offers, one must approach them with caution. In the world, there is nothing that does not change, deteriorate, or perish. This is inherent in the very nature of existence.

This sutra describes the pain and sorrow that arise due to the impermanence and constant change of life. Home, family, wealth, friendships, career, status, health, beauty, youth, marriage, relationships with children... Everything either changes form or eventually fades away.

In addition to all of this, there are also the subconscious accumulations that a person experiences within, which they do not know how to cope with and which govern them. Having lived within family and society for thousands of years, various patterns have formed in the human subconscious. These patterns, whose correctness or incorrectness is not even questioned, rise from the subconscious and continuously influence the person.

As long as the external world continues to exert its influence on us, is it possible to free ourselves from these? Can we find what lies beyond suffering—the unchanging, the incorruptible, and the eternal?

What does yoga say? Yoga does not tell us not to experience the pleasures and happiness that life offers. On the contrary, it tells us to live fully and in the highest quality possible so that we create good karma. Mastery lies in not becoming attached. It must be remembered that everything, including our body, is temporary. Therefore, one should not become attached to either the pleasures or the pains that come with the body.

Sutra 2.16

Heyam duhkham anagatam

Heyam: That which can be avoided, that which can be escaped

Duhkham: Suffering, pain

Anagatam: That which is in the future, that which has not yet come

The suffering that has not yet been experienced can be avoided.

Nothing can be done for the karmas that are currently being experienced. These will be lived through. The arrow has left the bow, and karma has reached the person. However, if these karmas are experienced calmly, in harmony with the flow, fairly, and fearlessly, the pain that comes with this karma can be eliminated for the future. Like a chess player making masterful moves, both the present and the future can be created as desired.

The wise know that there are inevitable pains in life. Therefore, they accept everything as it is. This is where the value of yoga knowledge becomes evident.

Yogis know that even death is not a solution to escape suffering. Because death is like sleep. When you wake up, the day's problems stand before you just as they were. The philosophy of rebirth is very important in this sense. Knowing the continuity of life encourages a person to improve and correct themselves.

In yoga, solving the problem requires enlightenment, transforming action into its highest form. Transforming in this body, right now... Enlightenment, here and now... If this does not happen, problems are merely postponed, and the seeds of future sufferings are also sown.

Sutra 2.17

Drashtri drishyayoh samyogah heyah hetuh

Drashtri: The one who sees everything, the soul

Drishyayoh: The seen, the external world

Samyogah: Union, becoming one

Heyah: To end, to be avoided

Hetuh: Cause

When the one who sees everything (Purusha) ends its union with the seen (Prakriti), there remains no cause for the creation of suffering.

Patanjali reminds us once again of the cause of suffering. His philosophy is based on two concepts:

1. Purusha – The soul. It is the all-knowing and all-seeing.
2. Prakriti – Creation, nature, the entire visible universe, including our bodies.

When we say “I am thirsty” or “I am unhappy,” thirst is related to our body, and unhappiness is related to our mind. These belong to Prakriti, the visible, and are not our true self. Purusha is the seer, the true self, and represents infinity. It has no deficiencies or needs.

Believing that we are what we possess is the reason for our suffering. Home, belongings, wealth, beauty, and youth are things we temporarily have. These belong to the external world, meaning they are the "seen" things. When these things change, deteriorate, or are lost, people think that what happens to them happens to themselves.

This is the mistaken belief that the seer and the seen are one. However, the soul remains unchanged because the soul is eternal. Things come and go.

When one awakens to this truth and the transient nature of things, they are freed from suffering.

Sutra 2.18

Prakasa kriya sthiti silam bhutendriyatmakam bhogapavargrtham drshyam

Prakasa: Light (sattva)

Kriya: Action (rajas)

Sthiti: Darkness, inertia (tamas)

Silam: Quality, characteristic

Bhuta: Element

Indriya: Sense organs

Atmakam: Embodiment

Bhoga: The deceptive pleasures of the external world

Apavarga: Liberation

Artham: Purpose, reason for existence

Drshyam: The seen

The experiences we go through are created through the five elements and the five sense organs.

The quality of these experiences is determined by the characteristics known as sattvic, rajasic, and tamasic in human nature.

The sole purpose of these experiences is for a person to mature through the lessons learned and to reach a state where no new experiences are needed.

This is the meaning of liberation.

Here, there are intertwined and condensed concepts that need to be explained. These concepts are:

1. Elements and sense organs are related to each other:

The ether (space, akasha) element is related to hearing.

The air element is related to touch.

The fire element is related to sight.

The water element is related to taste.

The earth element is related to smell.

The five sense organs enable a person's interaction with the external world. Humans perceive the world through the senses and create actions accordingly.

2. Gunas play a role in determining the nature of actions. Tamas represents darkness, rajas represents activity and ambition, while sattva represents light. Sattva and tamas create duality by symbolizing light and darkness, whereas rajas provide the means to move from darkness to light through action.

Life is perceived and experienced through the sense organs. The quality of perception, or its nature, is shaped by the gunas. A person understands and interacts with life based on the predominant guna within them. Those who are dominated by tamas and rajas experience life in a sharp, harsh, and rigid manner, creating karmas accordingly, while sattvic individuals live life in a softer and more harmonious way, generating karmas in alignment with that nature.

3. This sutra once again introduces the concepts of Purusha and Prakriti. It is said: "The eye that sees everything cannot see itself. To see itself, it creates a reflection." In this analogy, Purusha is the eye that sees everything, while Prakriti is the reflection that Purusha creates to perceive itself.

Everything that has been created, including bodies, belongs to Prakriti. Prakriti exists to help understand Purusha. In order for Prakriti to reveal Purusha to beings, it must offer them lifetimes. Each lifetime is composed of a spiral of many experiences. Through these experiences, a person learns and matures.

There are no coincidences in nature. Everyone lives a life suited to their needs. Nature, like a mother, provides experiences for her children to mature. Then, she desires for them to become independent, free individuals.

Over time, everyone draws lessons from their own life and matures through these lessons. A person who has experienced life fully, with both its joys and sorrows, eventually reaches a point of fulfillment and begins to seek the ultimate truth.

Sutra 2.19

Visesha avishesha lingamatra alingani guna parvani

Visesha: Different, having characteristics, distinctive

Avishesha: Not yet having distinct characteristics

Lingamatra: Defined, having a name

Alingani: Not yet manifested, completely conceptual

Guna: The three qualities present in everything (tamas, rajas, and sattva)

Parvani: Levels

The gunas exist in four different states according to their levels and extend from the senses, gradually becoming more subtle, up to Prakriti.

According to Vedanta philosophy, Prakriti is made of mind and matter. Moreover, Prakriti is formed by the power of Purusha, just as heat is produced by the power of fire. Just as heat cannot exist without fire, Prakriti could not exist without Purusha. The reason for the existence of Prakriti cannot be grasped by the mind because the mind itself is a part of Prakriti.

When the gunas are in a state of balance, creation remains in a potential state. When this balance is disrupted, creation begins. These three forces exist together in infinite combinations.

Patanjali, in this sutra, describes the transition of creation from the abstract to the concrete in sequence. The most known and tangible among these are the senses. It is impossible for an ordinary person to perceive the others.

Becoming aware of the senses is the first step in the process of consciousness. Recognizing the senses, understanding the structure of the mind, then turning toward the source that forms the mind, perceiving the supreme intelligence, and ultimately reaching the subtlest form of Prakriti requires significant effort.

For this, a special depth of samadhi is necessary.

Sutra 2.20

Drashta drshimatrah suddhah api pratyayanupasyah

Drashta: The seer, Purusha

Drshimatrah: Pure consciousness

Suddah: Pure

Api: Also, along with, furthermore, even

Pratyaya: Mental perception

Anupasyah: Seen through it

The seer (Purusha) is pure consciousness itself. Because it is completely pure, it perceives life through the colors painted by the mind (Prakriti).

In the previous sutras, the characteristics of Prakriti were explained. Now, Purusha is being described. According to Samkhya philosophy, which is the foundation of yoga, everything from the lowest form to the highest intelligence is Prakriti.

Beyond Prakriti is Purusha. While Prakriti is in a constant state of change, Purusha remains unchanging because it is the supreme reality. What is the supreme reality? It is the truth that the entire universe originates from It, rests in It, and ultimately returns to It.

We know that when individuals become disconnected from their true essence, they perceive the world solely through the filter of the mind. The mind is constantly in a state of change due to the influence of the gunas, and because of the samskaras (subconscious impressions) buried deep within, it perceives everything subjectively.

In the sutra, this truth is reiterated once again. Although the seer is actually Purusha, it is covered by the veil of the mind, so everything is filtered through the mind, that is, Prakriti, and is seen through its perspective.

Sutra 2.21

Tadarthah eva drshyasya atma

Tadarthah: For the sake of the seer, for Purusha

Eva: Only, merely

Drshyasya: The known, the seen, Prakriti

Atma: Atman, the divine essence of a person, individual soul, true self, Purusha

The reason for the existence of Prakriti is solely to realize Purusha.

The purpose of the existence of Prakriti, that is, creation, is solely to serve the understanding of Purusha. When a person realizes their own essence, the role of Prakriti comes to an end. This means that an enlightened person no longer has the need for reincarnation.

There is no meaning in a person chasing after Prakriti and asking for more than it can give. In matters connected to the external world, such as money, fame, and pleasure, as well as in the lessons to be learned, one cannot receive more than what is needed. If one tries to take more, they become worn out and fall ill.

And a person cannot escape from Prakriti either. What must be experienced will be experienced, if not in this life, then in the next, or the one after that... With courage, resilience, and serenity, whatever needs to be lived must be lived, lessons must be learned, and one must mature.

Sutra 2.22

Krtartham prati nashtam api anashtam tadanya sadharanatvat

Krtartham: When a person reaches the goal

Prati: For him

Nashtam: Ceases to exist

Api: Also, likewise, even

Anastam: Does not cease to exist, remains

Tad: His, theirs

Anya: Others

Sadharatvat: Common to others, shared by all

Prakriti dissolves for the person who attained the goal, yet for others, it remains ever-present.

In the previous sutra, it was stated that the purpose of Prakriti's existence is to serve the realization of Purusha.

For the one who has realized Purusha, the role of nature, Prakriti, has ended. However for others, worldly life continues to exist. Because the goal is for them to also gain experiences, grow, and mature. For this reason, Prakriti will continue to create lessons and provide experiences according to each individual's needs.

Sutra 2.23

Sva svami sakyoh svarupa upalabdhi hetuh samyogah

Sva: One's own self

Svami: Owner, master, a person united with their essence

Saktyoh: Related to the two forces (Purusha and Prakriti)

Svarupa: One's true essence, own nature

Upalabdhi: Attainment

Hetuh: Cause, purpose

Samyogah: Union, coming together

The union of Purusha and Prakriti (the illusion of being one) enables Purusha to understand its own true nature and power.

In the beginning, the existence of Prakriti was necessary. In its union with Prakriti, Purusha is initially nourished by ignorance. Because of this, it becomes attached to pleasure, pain, desire, and illnesses. When the true nature of Prakriti is understood, renunciation (vairagya), non-attachment, and surrender (Ishvara pranidhana) begin to develop.

Prakriti desires a person to be balanced, courageous, and peaceful. These are also what yoga teaches and cultivates.

In this sense, Prakriti is a necessary tool for Purusha to realize itself. However, one must not confuse the tool with the goal. The separation of these two is achieved through realization. With this power of realization, a person pursues the correct answer to the question, "Who am I?" Once the goal is accomplished, the tool is no longer needed.

Sutra 2.24

Tasya hetuh avidya

Tasya: This union

Hetuh: Cause

Avidya: Ignorance, lack of knowledge (one's ignorance about life and oneself)

The cause of this union is ignorance (avidya).

The previous sutra also mentioned the necessity of Purusha uniting with Prakriti to learn about itself. Here, it is once again emphasized that the cause of this union is ignorance.

The idea of "I am this body" is nothing more than an empty belief. This empty belief makes a person unhappy. In the 16th sutra, it was emphasized that a person can avoid unhappiness.

The issue is to rise beyond empty belief. Through yoga, attachment to the body and the joys and sorrows that come with it gradually diminishes.

The initially necessary union of Prakriti and Purusha slowly begins to transform. Individual consciousness first experiences the sufferings of the lower realms and gains considerable knowledge about them. As the process unfolds, the person progresses from coarse worlds to higher realms. Since it is impossible to grow and ascend without passing through this process, these challenging and demanding periods should be seen as times of the most significant trials and, in fact, should be regarded as sacred.

Sutra 2.25

Tad abhavat samyogabhavah hanam taddrseh kaivalyam

Tad abhavat: The disappearance of ignorance

Samyogah: Union

Abhavah: Disappearance, vanishing

Hanam: Elimination

Taddrseh: Of the seer

Kaivalyam: Liberation

When ignorance disappears, the union of Purusha and Prakriti also dissolves, which means that the seer becomes independent.

When a painful situation arises in life, one must pause and ask, "Who is suffering?" It is the ego that suffers, and the reason is that the mind has been conditioned in that matter.

According to yoga philosophy, one must free oneself from the control of Prakriti. This means liberation from attachment to life's offerings and from being carried away by the deceptive power of the external world. Otherwise, Prakriti continuously dictates itself to the individual. Until life's lessons are learned and maturity is attained, one keeps experiencing the same things over and over again.

Raja yoga (Ashtanga yoga) explains the ways to train the mind. The external world is an illusion created by the mind. When the mind realizes this, it transcends the illusion. At this point, Prakriti fulfills its purpose and disappears, and the seer, that is, Purusha, becomes free from Prakriti.

Sutra 2.26

Vivekakyatir aviplava hanopayah

Vivekakhyatir: Discernment

Aviplava: Uninterrupted, continuous

Hanopayah: Means of elimination

Through the uninterrupted flow of discernment (viveka), ignorance is eliminated.

First, the term viveka needs to be explained. Viveka refers to the ability to distinguish between what is real and what is not. This sutra speaks of continuous and uninterrupted effort. It emphasizes the necessity of first thoroughly understanding the nature of what is real and what is not, and then holding firmly to this knowledge.

The universe and the external world are constantly changing, transforming from one thing to another. Everything, including bodies and minds, changes at every moment. In the relationship established with the outside world through the mind, people always cling to what is changing and forget what never changes. Yet beyond all of this lies the unchanging, indestructible reality.

"What is Prakriti, why does it exist, what is its structure and characteristics? What is Purusha and what are its characteristics?" The answers to these questions must become clear. Ignorance can only be eliminated in this way.

Sutra 2.27

Tasya saptadha pranta-bhumih prajna

Tasya: Its

Saptadha: Sevenfold

Pranta: At the final stage

Prajna: Wisdom, insight

In the seven-stage process of viveka, wisdom is ultimately attained.

The stages on the path to enlightenment are as follows:

- 1- Doubts are erased. The search comes to an end. The person knows with all their heart that they are on the right path.
- 2- Suffering disappears. Nothing, internal or external in the world, causes the person pain. The Bhagavad Gita says, "Yoga is the severance of contact with suffering."
- 3- Complete knowledge is attained. The source of unlimited and infinite knowledge is the person themselves.
- 4- The person is in complete ease and fulfillment regarding their dharma (nature, qualities, and duties). Ramakrishna says, "They not only cross the ocean of the world themselves but also help the travelers around them to cross it."
- 5- Chitta, meaning all layers of the mind, is completely purified. All efforts, struggles, and mental fluctuations disappear.
- 6- The mind, having been freed from the gunas, dissolves along with the cause that created it.
- 7- At this final stage, the self has reunited with the self. Here, the state of "One who knows themselves knows everything" emerges. There is nothing beyond oneself. The sense of "I" has transformed into "oneness."

Sutra 2.28

Yoganganusthanat asuddhi kshaye jnanadiptih a vivekakhyateh

Yoganga: The stages of yoga

Anusthanat: To be supported, to practice with devotion

Asuddhi: Impurities

Kshaye: To eliminate

Jnana: Spiritual knowledge

Diptih: Bright light

Avivekakhyateh: The light of knowledge, the essence of knowledge

Through the stages of yoga, a person is purified of all impurities. The light of wisdom shining within reflects the essence of knowledge.

Sutra 2.29

Yama nyama asana pranayama pratyahara dharana dhyana samadhayo ashtavangani

Yama: Ethical rules that regulate a person's relationship with the external world

Nyama: Regulations that a person must apply to themselves

Asana: Yoga postures

Pranayama: Breath exercises performed to regulate prana

Pratyahara: Control of the five senses

Dharana: Concentration of the mind

Dhyana: Meditation

Samadhayo: Integration of individual consciousness with universal consciousness

Ashta: Eight

Vangani: Step, path

Ashtanga yoga is achieved through eight steps: ethical rules that determine a person's relationship with the external world (yama), disciplines that a person must follow for themselves (nyama), yoga postures (asana), breath exercises performed to regulate prana (pranayama), control of the five senses (pratyahara), concentration (dharana), meditation (dhyana), and the integration of individual consciousness with universal consciousness (samadhi).

Ashta means eight. Ashtanga yoga, therefore, refers to the eightfold path of yoga. With this sutra, Patanjali begins to explain the eightfold path in detail.

Sutra 2.30

Ahimsa satya asteya brahmacharya aparigraha yamaha

Ahimsa: Not causing harm

Satya: Being truthful

Asteya: Not taking what belongs to others

Brahma: The supreme being

Brahmacharya: Living with the awareness of the supreme being, moderation

Aparigraha: Non-accumulation

Yamaha: Ethical rules that regulate a person's relationship with the external world

The rules of yama are as follows: Not causing harm, being truthful, not stealing, practicing moderation, not accumulating.

The rules of yama are the first step of Ashtanga yoga.

Sutra 2.31

Jati desa kala samaya anavacchinnah sarvabhaumah mahavratam

Jati: Caste, class

Desa: Place, country

Kala: Time

Samaya: Conditions

Anavacchinnah: Unconditional, unlimited

Sarvabhaumah: Universal

Mahavratam: Great vow

The rules of yama are great vows that are not limited by status, place, time, and conditions, and have universal validity.

The yama rules are applicable to all types of yoga and form the foundation of them all. These rules are unbendable and are valid at all times, in all places, for everyone.

Sutra 2.32

Sauca santosha tapah svadyaya Ishvara pranidhanani nyamah

Sauca: Purity, cleanliness

Santosha: Contentment

Tapah: Self-discipline, practices that one imposes on oneself for purification

Sva: Self

Adhyaya: Approach

Svadyaya: Self-study, introspection

Ishvara pranidhanani: Dedication to God, surrendering to God

Nyamah: Regulations one must follow for personal discipline

The rules of nyama are as follows: Purity, contentment, self-discipline, self-study, dedication to God.

Sutra 2.33

Vitarkabadhane pratipaksha bhavanam

Vitarkabadhane: Disturbing thought or feeling

Pratipaksha: Opposite

Bhavanam: To create, to make a habit

When negative emotions or thoughts arise in the mind, it is necessary to make it a habit to transform them into their opposites.

Looking at life negatively harms the individual. Furthermore, negativity is completely contrary to the teachings of yoga. Unfortunately, however, everyone has these kinds of thought patterns already formed in their minds.

A person who follows the path of yoga rebuilds their life in every way. They immediately notice any negativity and replace it with positive thoughts. This is the way to free oneself from negativity.

A yogi does not find faults, shame, complain, reject, insist, or belittle. They are always positive, in a state of acceptance, and do their best for both themselves and others.

Sutra 2.34

**Vitarka himsadayah krta karita anumoditah lobha krodha moha purvakah mrdu madhya
adhimatrah duhkha ajnana anantaphalah iti pratipaksha bhavanam**

Vitarkah: Negative emotion or thought

Himsadayah: To cause harm

Krta: Done by oneself

Karita: To make someone do evil

Anumoditah: To condone evil

Lobha: Greed

Krodha: Anger

Moha: Delusion

Purvakah: Cause

Mrdu: Mild

Madhya: Moderate

Adhimatrah: Intense

Duhkha: Suffering

Ajnana: Ignorance

Ananta: Infinity

Phalah: Result, outcome

Iti: Therefore

Pratipaksha: Opposite

Bhavanam: To create, to make a habit

The act of causing harm, whether due to greed, anger, or ignorance, whether done by oneself, made to be done by others, or condoned, regardless of whether the harm is small, moderate, or large, will always return to the person as pain and suffering. The way to avoid this is to make it a habit to reverse evil and transform it into goodness.

Here, as in the previous sutra, the concept of pratipaksha bhavanam, or turning things around, is discussed again. There is no way to avoid the rules of yama and nyama. One should never engage in wrong actions. Otherwise, the negative karma created will come and find the person. Even if one retreats to a cave or isolation, karma will still come and find them.

Doing good, creating good karma, opens and cleanses the path of yoga. Therefore, wrong actions must always be replaced by the right ones.

Sutra 2.35

Ahimsa pratishthayam tat sannidhau vaira tyagah

Ahimsa: Non-violence, not causing harm

Pratishthayam: Firmly established, deeply rooted

Tat sannidhau: In its presence

Vaira: Hostility

Tyagah: To be erased, to abandon

In the presence of a person firmly committed to the principle of non-violence, hostilities disappear.

This sutra explains the power of Ahimsa. Ahimsa is the most important of the yama and nyama rules. When harm is caused to someone through words, thoughts, or actions, the energy created by that harm returns in the same way. This is a law that no one can alter.

Violence used for self-defense is not considered Ahimsa because the intention is not to cause harm. However, many yogis do not resort to violence, even in the face of danger, to protect themselves.

The sutra says that when a person strictly follows the principle of Ahimsa, even the wildest animals become tame, and in the environment of peace and security created, a tiger and a lamb can peacefully coexist. This is because, when the rule of Ahimsa is followed, love and compassion naturally arise.

Sutra 2.36

Satya pratishthayam kriya phalahasrayatvam

Satya: Truth

Pratishthayam: Firmly established

Kriya: Action taken for purification

Phalah: Result

Asrayatvam: Service

When a person is connected to the truth, every word that comes out of their mouth becomes reality.

Lying is contrary to nature. There is no lie in nature. Plants and animals do not lie. The human body does not lie. Internal organs and muscles do not lie. So, who is the one who lies? The one who lies is, the mind.

Why does a person lie? Sometimes out of fear, sometimes out of pride, and sometimes for personal gain. Lying complicates and makes life difficult. The greatest harm is done to the person themselves. Because they must continue the lie, and this is a very difficult and exhausting task.

A person may deceive others, and they may even fall into this game themselves. But deep down, from somewhere within, the heart always whispers that this is not right. When a person becomes aware of this and decides to no longer lie, to not deviate from the truth, this decision gives them great strength.

Staying true to the truth shows strength and reflects a high character trait.

What is reality? Reality means being as you are. There is no exaggeration, no secrecy, no lies or gossip, no mockery. All of these are contrary to reality and, in a sense, are lies.

In reality, there is an open, clear, impartial, just, and strong attitude.

Sacred texts say, "Reality is God." In this sense, staying true to reality is connecting with God.

The sutra states that the words of a person who aligns with and remains faithful to reality will turn into truth.

Sutra 2.37

Asteya pratishthayam sarva ratnopasthanam

Asteya: Not stealing

Pratishthayam: To be attached, to be established

Sarva: All

Ratna: Precious gem, wealth

Upasthanam: To obtain

When a person is firmly committed to the principle of not stealing, all wealth naturally flows to them.

This refers to all forms of theft. It encompasses everything, from the most crude form, like silently entering a home and stealing possessions, to using a person's thoughts, words, or work without permission.

When we carefully look at the principle of Asteya, or not stealing, it is seen to be in harmony with all the yama rules. In fact, the yama rules support each other and are interconnected.

Being envious, desiring what one does not have, is not suitable for yoga. A yogi is content with what the universe offers them, for they are happy with it. Their focus is not on what is outside. The glitter of the outside world does not affect their appetite. They do not express themselves through their possessions; they are simple, light, secure, and at ease.

When a person reaches this level of contentment, all the wealth in nature naturally flows to them.

Sutra 2.38

Brahmacharya pratishthayam virya labhah

Brahma: Pure consciousness, God

Acharya: To direct towards something

Brahmacharya: To dedicate one's life to God. (Here) to dedicate by controlling sexual energy

Prasisthayam: To practice

Virya: Life force, sexual energy

Labhah: To gain

Great power is obtained through the control of sexual energy.

Virya means sexual energy. Through this energy, living beings come into the world. Life is born from this energy. By using sexual power in a controlled manner, not wasting it, a person gains high perception and memory power.

This is not about suppressing sexual power, because that is not possible. Suppression leads to lies, anger, and violence. Brahmacharya means preserving and safeguarding this energy. According to yoga philosophy, this energy is necessary for moral and spiritual development.

Brahmacharya consists of two words: Brahman is, pure consciousness, and Acharya is, to head towards it. Therefore, Brahmacharya means "one who is constantly in Brahman awareness." This refers to the person's mind moving away from the dualism of male and female and directing itself towards Atman.

In the Western world, life is so centered around sexuality, the consumption economy, and entertainment that it is difficult to understand this subject. For this reason, the principle of Brahmacharya is often expressed in terms of moderation, balance, and devotion. Sri K. Pattabhi Jois' Yoga Mala is a good source regarding the topic of Brahmacharya.

Sutra 2.39

Aparigraha sthairye janmakathamta sambodh

Aparigraha: Not accumulating

Sthairye: To be firmly established

Janma: Birth

Kathamta: How and why

Sambodhah: Insight gained through enlightenment

Aparigraha means not accumulating. This includes not only material possessions, money, and wealth, but also the accumulation of emotions and memories.

A person is either trying to fill the feeling of inner emptiness by accumulating possessions, wealth, and money, or the more they own, the more secure and powerful they feel in life. There are also people who cling to their emotions and memories, living with them, in a sense, constantly staying in the past is a kind of accumulation.

The more possessions and things a person has, the more attachments and connections they have. However, one of the slogans of yoga is "Simple, high thinking."

As the things a person owns decrease, their lightness increases. Living a simple life without owning anything makes a person feel comfortable and at peace.

In India, we visited an enlightened yogi who lived in an extremely simple hut with almost no belongings. When we asked her, she looked at us with a childlike smile and explained that she had two pieces of clothing. When she washed one, wore the other. Then, she thanked us for the gift we offered and said that she would distribute it to those in need, as she had no use for it herself.

Not accepting gifts also falls under the principle of Aparigraha. This is because receiving a gift burdens a person both materially and emotionally. A gift binds both the giver and the receiver.

Karma is the bond that ties a person to this world. It is these bonds, or karmas, that create the future and future lives. By applying the principle of Aparigraha to free oneself from all material and spiritual bonds, desires for the external world, emotions, and memories, a person untangles the knots of their karmas and becomes free from them.

In this way, the person understands why they will return to the world and the reasons behind the bonds that lead to it.

Sutra 2.40

Saucat svanga jugupsa paraih asamsargah

Saucat: Purification, cleansing

Svanga: One's own body

Jugupsa: To want to protect, to distance

Paraih: With others

Asamsargah: To cut off, not to become polluted, to remain separate

As a person cleanses and purifies themselves, they begin to desire to maintain this purity and avoid contact with others.

Here, Patanjali begins to explain the nyama rules.

With the yama rules, a person changes both physically and mentally over time, becoming cleansed and purified. This purification and refinement lead to an increase in sensitivity. The person is pleased with this purity they have gained, as their mind has become brighter—meaning their perception and memory have strengthened—and their body has become more agile, lighter, and more comfortable. However, at the same time, they become more affected by the dirt and rust of the world and other people.

Özdemir Asaf says: "All colors were getting dirty at the same pace, they gave first place to white."

The yogi desires to maintain this purity and is, in fact, compelled to do so. For this reason, they carefully choose everything they come into contact with and, by necessity, withdraw to their own corner.

The destiny of the yoga journey is, in a sense, solitude. It is an adventure that can only be undertaken with oneself, as it is a journey of self-discovery.

Sutra 2.41

Sattvasuddhi saumanasya aikagrya indriya jaya at- madarshana yogyatvani cha

Sattva: One of the three gunas. Purity, brightness, goodness, knowledge

Sattvasuddhi: Purity of Sattva

Saumanasya: Cheerfulness, happiness

Aikagrya: The mind's ability to focus on a single point

Indriya: Sense organs

Jaya: To control

Atmadarshana: Realization of Atman (individual self, one's essence, Purusha)

Yogyatvani: Adequacy, suitability

Cha: And

As the purity of Sattva increases, the person becomes more cheerful. From this, a mental structure emerges that can easily focus, control the sense organs, and has the adequacy to realize Atman.

As sattva spreads, both physical and mental purity increase. Traits of tamas and rajas, such as envy, anger, greed, and passions, disappear. In their place, joy, peace, and ease take over. Joy and positivity are characteristics of spiritual development.

Progress in yoga shows its first signs through a smiling face. Pain and unhappiness stem from tamasic and rajasik traits. Additionally, the mind, freed from negativities through sattva, becomes calm and able to focus easily.

A person's understanding of Atman, their individual soul or essence, is possible only through meditation. With a purified mind, meditation becomes easy and effortless. Such a mind has become suitable for understanding and realizing Atman.

In Chapter 14, Verse 2 of the Bhagavad Gita, it says: "The light of knowledge rises, spreading through all the gates of the body." This refers to the rise of sattva.

Sutra 2.42

Santoshat anuttamah sukha labhah

Santoshat: Contentment

Anuttamah: Supreme

Sukha: Happiness

Labhah: Gain, attainment

Contentment grants the person the highest form of happiness.

Desires are normal, and one must strive to fulfill them. In yoga, there is a fourfold path known as Kama, Artha, Dharma, and Moksha.

Kama refers to desires and wants. Artha emphasizes the importance of material power and wealth necessary to fulfill these desires. Dharma expresses a high sense of responsibility that never compromises on truth and justice towards the universe, the world, and oneself. Moksha refers to the freedom that will ultimately be attained.

Contentment is the cessation of chasing material pleasures. In other words, contentment is a state that becomes possible through the elevation of one's consciousness. It is the awakening to the truth about oneself and the continuous, eternal happiness that comes from this awakening.

Osho says: "It is very important to stay alert to the wealth that stands on the surface of life. Only a person who becomes aware of the deceptive world of this wealth will embark on a journey to find the treasure hidden at the very center of life. The wealth attained will eradicate poverty. Because this wealth can never be taken away, and only what cannot be taken away is your true wealth. What cannot be taken away is also something that cannot be found, because what can be found is something that can be lost.

Inner wealth is simply apparent. It is everywhere; you just need to recognize it. In fact, recognizing it means already having access to it.”

Osho, Love Letters to Life

Sutra 2.43

Kaya indriya siddhih asuddhi kshayat tapasah

Kaya: Body

Indriya: Senses, sense organs

Siddhih: Mystical powers

Asuddhi: Pollution, toxicity

Kshayat: To eliminate, to destroy

Tapasah: Self-discipline, purification, intense spiritual practices

Through self-discipline, or Tapas, one is freed from the toxins present in the body and senses. This grants the person health and mystical powers.

To cleanse and purify the body and sense organs, Tapas, or self-discipline, is practised. A person must practice discipline to eliminate their weaknesses, flaws, and addictions. Without discipline, it is not possible for a person to be cleansed and purified. The practices performed on this path are called Tapas.

Tapas means to burn. To obtain gold, ore is placed on fire. In this way, the essence of the gold is revealed. Similarly, self-discipline burns away all physical and mental toxins within a person, purifying and cleansing them. Without purification, and without becoming purified, it is not possible for the person's path to open.

The pains that life presents sometimes burn a person. Pain, in a sense, is a teacher. So, the things that upset and hurt a person are actually their teachers. When one learns from a situation and gains experience, the events can be remembered with goodness and love. If a person can emerge from their pain, it shows that they have learned the lesson they needed to learn. For this reason, yoga teaches that pain should be sanctified.

Purifying oneself from toxins through willpower not only grants strength but also leads to the emergence of mystical powers. Some people practice tapas solely to acquire mystical powers. Through tapas, a person becomes so cleansed and purified that attaining mystical powers becomes possible for them. However, in yoga, acquiring these powers serves as a means to awaken the immense potential within one's own essence. In other words, like other elements, tapas is not the goal in the journey of yoga but merely a tool.

Sutra 2.44

Svadyaya istadevata samprayogah

Svadyaya: To work on the self by studying sacred texts

Istadevata: The believed God

Samprayogah: Union, merging

The self-investigation eventually provides the person with the opportunity to unite with the God they believe in.

The fourth step of the nyama rules is to engage in practices aimed at finding the answer to the question, "Who am I?" The practices involved in this are listening to enlightened individuals, reading sacred texts, or connecting with a chosen mantra and repeating it.

Svadhya is to work with dedication. In order to establish a true connection with knowledge, one must dive into its depths. To achieve this, one needs to listen, read, think, and meditate upon it.

The presence of an enlightened guru is a great blessing for the student. The meaning of the word guru is "One who illumination the darkness."

Sutra 2.45

Samadhi siddhih Ishvara Pranidhana

Samadhi: The state of becoming one through deep meditation, complete integration, union

Siddhih: Supernatural powers

Ishvara Pranidhana: Dedication to God, surrendering to God

Through dedication to God and complete surrender, one attains supernatural powers and reaches Samadhi.

This is the final principle of the nyama rules.

Sauca: Through cleanliness, the body and mind are purified, and the person freed from toxins is able to embark on their sacred journey.

Santosha: Through contentment, it is understood that happiness does not come from external world pleasures, but rather from the inner self. In this way, the person settles into a peaceful and fulfilled way of life.

Tapas: Through self-discipline, the person gains intuition, sensitivity, and mystical powers.

Svadhya: As a result of their practices, the person awakens to their true identity.

Ishvara Pranidhana: The person has now become aware of the divinity within themselves. They have felt that life energy takes form in the body to experience life. Recognizing that their own body is merely an instrument for experiencing life, they have surrendered their will, with great love, to a higher will. With trust and peace in the presence of absolute power, they have surrendered to it. The individual will has reunited with its source and has found rest. The understanding of "Your will be done, not mine" is Ishvara Pranidhana.

"Oh our God, who is our winged self,
The power that governs us within, is your power,
The desire that arises us within, is your desire,
The urge within us that can turn our nights, which are yours, into days, which are also yours, is your impulse within us.
We cannot ask anything from you,
For you know our needs before they are born within us.
All we need is you; and by giving us something more of yourself, you have given us everything."
Kahlil Gibran, The Prophet

Sutra 2.46

Sthira sukham asanam

Sthira: Firm and stable

Sukham: Comfortable, peaceful, happy

Asanam: Yoga postures

Yoga postures should be firm, stable, and comfortable.

The third principle, following the yama and nyama rules, is asana. Patanjali defines asanas as positions that strengthen and stabilize the person, allowing them to feel the cosmic vibration—filling them with peace and happiness.

Asanas make the body strong, resilient, and flexible, while also purifying it. At the same time, they create a transformation and change in the person, guiding them on their spiritual journey. In this regard, yoga postures are different from any sport.

Yoga is rapidly spreading in the Western world. People first begin yoga with the intention of improving their health, comfort, and getting in shape. Fortunately, over time, yoga draws those who seek peace, tranquility, and reconciliation with themselves and the world on a deeper journey.

Sthira Sukham, meaning firm and comfortable... These two concepts initially indicate the presence of a duality. To be both extremely strong and stable, and at the same time, extremely relaxed... As the practice progresses, the person awakens to the philosophy underlying this. In order to be comfortable and peaceful, one must work hard and grow stronger.

For the postures to be firm and nourish the person with a sense of happiness, both the body and mind must be clean and free from toxins. Toxins create stiffness, resistance, and pain on both levels. When the body is toxic and the mind is dealing with negative thoughts and emotions, it is impossible to be at ease in the postures. The body is constantly filled with pains that disturb the mind. This situation strains the breath and unsettles the mind.

The student who feels the miraculous effects of yoga becomes aware of the obstacles that arise while performing the asanas. At the very least, before practicing the asanas, they begin to focus on proper nutrition and strive to move beyond the thoughts that weigh them down. This marks the beginning of the yoga journey.

All postures have effects on the physical, mental, and spiritual levels. As a person opens, stretches, and strengthens physically, they also begin to gain self-confidence and awaken to their potential. All muscles, internal organs, glands, blood quality, and circulation change through the practice of asanas. The mind becomes aware of the grip of thoughts. It begins to understand what lies beyond thought. Contact with the soul brings forth new desires, longings, and aspirations in the person.

Sutra 2.47

Prayatna saithilya ananta samapattihyam

Prayatna: Ongoing effort

Saithilya: Relaxation

Ananta: Infinite, limitless

Samapattihyam: To return to the original form, to ultimately find one's true identity

To perfect the asanas is to become so skilled in the postures that they are completely effortless, and to be ready to meditate on the infinite.

Yoga is a practice that requires continuity. Mastering the asanas may take years of work. Repeating the yoga postures countless times never creates a sense of monotony in the person. This is because it is a practice that moves the person forward. While experiencing the same posture hundreds of times, each time is different. The breath is different, the body is different, and the awareness is different.

The two ends created in the asanas represent duality. Duality is the creation of boundaries by the mind in order to perceive nature. Duality is a tool for perception. In yoga, a person, through using this tool, comes to understand that they can transcend it. The concept of God, or infinity, points to what lies beyond duality.

Asanas, for this reason, are a wonderful step used in yoga to grasp infinity. To the person who can remain firm and still in a posture for hours, with their body, breath, and mind calm and peaceful, meditation naturally arises.

The more effortless and relaxed the body is, the more the breath relaxes, and naturally, the mind becomes a state of calmness, able to remain at peace and focus. The person prepares both physically and mentally for meditation. This is, in fact, the purpose of asanas. The great yogi Raghuram says, "Asanas are for transcending the body."

Sutra 2.48

Tatah dvandvah anabhighatah

Tatah: Therefore, henceforth, thus, as a result

Dvandvah: Opposites, duality

Anabhighatah: The disappearance of disturbances

Thus, the yogi is not affected by duality and remains undisturbed.

This sutra is a continuation of the previous one.

By discovering the nature of duality and transcending it, the yogi is no longer affected by the power and influence of opposites. The perspective on opposites such as existence and non-existence, birth and death, cold and hot, joy and sorrow changes. The body and mind, mind and soul are no longer seen as separate compartments. They are all one, mere reflections of existence.

Disunity ends, differences disappear. This is the realization of yoga and the liberation of the person.

Sutra 2.49

Tasmin sati svasa prasvasayoh gati vicchedah pranayamah

Tasmin: Thus

Sati: Once this is achieved (perfection in the asana)

Svasa: Inhalation

Prasvasayoh: Exhalation

Gati: Movement, flow

Vicchedah: To stop, to interrupt

Pranayamah: To control the life energy through the breath, to extend it

Once mastery in the asanas is achieved, the process of inhaling and exhaling becomes controllable.

Here, the fourth step of Ashtanga Yoga, the pranayama principle, is explained.

Pranayama means mastering the inhalation, exhalation, and retention of breath in order to control prana. In this way, by regulating and strengthening the flow of prana, the power and quantity of energy in the body are increased.

The word Prana is a Sanskrit term. It can be translated as life force or cosmic energy. It is the general name for all forces. All movements occur through its power. Magnetic energy, electrical energy, and radiant energy are all different expressions of it.

Without prana, there is no life. Life exists as long as prana remains in the body. When prana leaves the body, life ends.

Through pranayama practices, the prana, which lies dormant in the form of Kundalini, can be awakened. Kundalini is the stored pranic energy at the root of the spine. It is said to exist in all vertebrates. Only yogis know the mystery of this power and can awaken it from its slumber. Thus, prana, moving upward along the spine from the root, awakens and opens each chakra it passes. This path, extending along the spine to the crown chakra, is the boulevard to enlightenment.

Pranayama comes after asana because when one remains in the asana for an extended period, without feeling any discomfort—so relaxed that they forget the existence of the body—breathing becomes calm and subdued.

Sutra 2.50

Bahya abhyantara stambha vrttih desa kala samkhyabhih paridrshtah dirgha sukshmah

Bahya: Exhalation

Abhyantara: Inhalation

Stambha: To pause

Vrtteh: To fluctuate

Desa: Place

Kala: Time

Samkhyabhih: By numbers

Paridrstah: To regulate, to make measured

Dirgha: Long

Sukshma: So subtle that it cannot be perceived by the five senses

The subject is inhalation, exhalation, and retention (holding) of breath. The rhythmic regulation of the place, duration, and number of breaths is pranayama. Through pranayama, the breaths are lengthened and become more refined.

We mentioned that pranayama is the fourth step of the eight-limbed yoga. By the time this stage is reached, through yama, niyama, and asanas, the body and mind have been purified and cleansed of toxins, making them ready. Otherwise, pranayama practice performed without readiness and

consciousness can cause serious harm instead of benefit. Since pranayama is also an energy practice, it affects the entire system deeply. The person must practice these techniques under the guidance of a teacher.

Patanjali draws attention to these aspects of breath: drawing air in through inhalation, releasing it through exhalation, or holding it after inhalation and exhalation for a period. He does not specify a particular pranayama technique beyond this.

When the sutra mentions place, it refers to the part of the body where the breath enters and exits; when it mentions duration, it refers to the time spent on inhalation and retention, exhalation and retention; and when it mentions number, it refers to how many times these actions are repeated during a pranayama session.

Performing these practices with a calm, focused, and unhurried mind creates comfort and lightness in the breath. Through these practices, the breaths naturally lengthen, deepen, and become calmer, transforming into more refined breaths.

The movement of prana in the body and the movement of waves in the mind are parallel to each other. When the flow of prana becomes calm, the same calmness occurs in the mind. In other words, by controlling one, the other is naturally brought under control.

Sutra 2.51

Bahya abhyantara vishaya akshepi chaturthah

Bahya: Exhalation

Abhyantara: Inhalation

Vishaya: Field, region

Akshepi: To leave behind, to surpass

Chaturthah: Fourth

In pranayama, which is the fourth step of ashtanga yoga, there is a stage where even the act of breathing in and out is transcended.

In the pranayama described in the previous sutra, the breaths had become more refined and lengthened, and the mind had become very calm.

Here, even this level has been transcended. The breaths have naturally lengthened further, and the mind, with complete focus, is free from fluctuations. When the body and mind cease, there is no longer a need for the energy that comes with the breath. The act of inhaling and exhaling also naturally comes to a stop. This state is called kevala kumbhaka.

The 73rd and 74th sutras of Chapter 2 in the Hatha Yoga Pradipika say the following about Kevala Kumbhaka: "When perfection is achieved in retention, exhalation, and inhalation, Kevala Kumbhaka arises. One who perfects Kevala Kumbhaka and can stop the breath for as long as desired will have nothing left to attain in the three realms of existence."

The three levels of existence are the levels of consciousness. This refers to the daily mind, the subconscious, and the superconscious. Thus, the purpose of pranayama has been fulfilled, the depths of the mind have been reached, and the mystery has been solved.

The author of the book "Krishnamacharya, His Life and Teachings", which tells the story of the great yogi Krishnamacharya's life, shares memories of him stopping his breath and heartbeats. The author writes that his master emphasized that pranayama was the most important aspect of sadhanas, or yoga practices.

Sutra 2.52

Tatah kshiyate prakasa avaranam

Tatah: Therefore, henceforth, thus, as a result

Kshiyate: To vanish, to disappear

Prakasa: The light of the essence, supreme brightness

Avaranam: Veil, covering

In the end, the veil that covers the inner light disappears.

Pranayama both strengthens and purifies the body and mind with energy. Inhalation and exhalation are related to strengthening and purification. Through these processes, the mind returns to its original substance, which is the quality of sattva. The original substance of the mind is already sattva. Sattva represents purity, light, and knowledge.

The mind, which was obscured by ignorance and covered in darkness, finds the opportunity for purification and return to its original nature through the power of pranayama.

Sutra 2.53

Dharanasu cha योग्याtā manasah

Dharanasu: Concentration, focus, preparation for meditation

Cha: And

योग्याtā: Suitable, ready

Manasah: Belonging to the mind

And the mind becomes ready to focus on a single point.

In the first chapter of the book, Patanjali explained in detail the methods of concentration and its importance. In the sutras above, the preparation of the body and mind to begin concentration practices is described.

After the veil of ignorance is removed and the mind returns to its calm, peaceful state, the person becomes ready for the concentration promised by the eight-limbed yoga, and then for meditation. With the strength gained through asana and pranayama practices, meditation comes to the person naturally.

Sutra 2.54

Sva visaya asamprayoge cittasya svarupa anukarah iva indriyanam pratyaharah

Sva: The self, the essence of the person

Visaya: Things

Asamprayoge: Not connecting with it, staying away from it

Cittasya: The regions of the mind

Svarupa: The true essence of the person, one's nature

Anukarah: Imitating, following

Indriyanam: Of the senses

Pratyahara: Withdrawal

The withdrawal of the mind, which is directed outward through the senses, and redirecting it inward instead of towards external objects is called pratyahara.

We perceive the external world through our senses. The senses, like a mirror, reflect what they perceive to the mind. Whatever is seen, heard, smelled, touched, and tasted is transmitted to the mind. The entire preoccupation of the mind is with the external world.

Since the external world is very colorful and dynamic, the mind frantically tries to keep up with it and chases after it. It becomes attached to some things and follows them, while it dislikes others and tries to escape from them. This cycle of chasing and fleeing continues endlessly.

In this way, the mind exhausts all its power and energy, and this is called life. People do not even realize that this is an illusion, a mere delusion.

As the external world loses its allure, the focus shifts inward. Pratyahara means becoming aware of the deceptive influence of the senses and turning inward. In other words, pratyahara is about preferring solitude and silence a little more, eating less, speaking less, and preparing oneself for the inner journey.

Sutra 2.55

Tatah parama vashyata indriyanam

Tatah: Therefore, henceforth, thus, as a result

Parama: Perfect, supreme

Vashyata: To control

Indriyanam: Of the senses

Thus, the senses become perfectly controllable.

By regularly practicing pratyahara, the senses are brought completely under control. In a sense, the person becomes the master of their senses.

In the Bhagavad Gita, a battle is described. This battle, told metaphorically, actually represents a person's struggle with their own emotions. The worldly life itself is the battlefield that throws a person into turmoil. Arjuna, who represents the human being in life, finds himself in confusion, sitting in a war chariot pulled by five wild horses—symbolizing the five senses. If not restrained, these senses, like the horses, can drag a person toward destruction. Arjuna seeks help from Krishna. Representing supreme consciousness, Krishna takes the reins as the charioteer and teaches Arjuna how to bring balance to life.

When a person progresses through the stages of yoga, elevating their consciousness and gaining control over their senses, they win the battle with life. This is pratyahara.

Mystical Powers

Sutra 3.1

Desa bandhah chittasya dharana

Desa: A place, a point

Bandhah: Locking, binding

Chittasya: Belonging to the mind (the field encompassing all layers of the mind, such as thoughts, emotions, memories, intellect, and ego)

Dharana: Concentration, focus

Concentration means locking the mind onto a single point, and this is dharana.

In the second chapter, the eight limbs of Ashtanga Yoga were mentioned, and the first five limbs—yama, nyama, asana, pranayama, and pratyahara—were explained.

We begin the third chapter by explaining the remaining three limbs. These are dharana, dhyana, and samadhi. They are more internal, more abstract, and more subtle practices.

Dharana, the sixth limb of Ashtanga Yoga, is the restriction of the mind and its fixation on a single point. The mind can focus on the breath, mantras, sattvic objects, or inwardly on the heart chakra, higher chakras, or the senses. In the first chapter, various objects of concentration were suggested in detail.

The object of focus must be sattvic because rajasic objects disturb the mind, while tamasic objects make the mind dull and sluggish.

Concentration means gathering the waves of the mind, or vrittis, at a single point. If other thoughts intervene, it means that concentration is not present.

In dharana, there is only one vritti, and that is the object of focus itself.

Sutra 3.2

Tatra pratyaya ekatanata dhyanam

Tatra: Here, with this

Pratyaya: Staying focused on an object

Ekatanata: Continuous, uninterrupted flow

Dhyanam: Meditation

If concentration becomes a continuous, uninterrupted flow, it is called meditation (dhyana).

Through concentration practices, the state of meditation emerges. In dharana (concentration), attention is intermittent. Focus is frequently interrupted by other thoughts. The person becomes

aware of this and redirects their attention back to the object of focus. Persistent and continuous practice trains the mind in this regard. Eventually, a moment comes when the knowledge of the focused object begins to flow continuously and effortlessly. This is dhyana, or meditation. Meditation is a state of effortlessness.

Yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, and dharana require continuous and disciplined practice. Meditation (dhyana) is the sweet fruit, the reward of these efforts.

Just as sleep comes naturally when a person prepares and lays their head on the pillow, meditation also arises naturally after the practices mentioned above. In the state of sleep, time and space disappear. In meditation, too, there is no time or space. However, while sleep is a state of losing oneself, meditation is a state of finding oneself, as knowledge flows and light pours in.

In meditation, the thought waves that create disturbance and confusion in the mind have receded. All the qualities of the object of focus are flowing into the person. At this stage, the mind now serves as a powerful light, guiding the person to explore the hidden treasure of Atman within.

Sutra 3.3

Tadeva arthamatra nirbhasam svarupa sunyam iva samadhih

Tadeva: In the same way

Artha: Purpose, meaning

Matra: Only, merely

Nirbhasam: Reflection, appearance, revealing as it is

Svarupa: One's true form, essence

Sunyam: Emptiness, void

Iva: As if

Samadhi: Merging into the soul, uniting with the essence of the object

Samadhi arises naturally, just like meditation. In this state, due to the absolute emptiness created in the mind, the object appears in its true essence and as it really is.

This section explains how dharana, dhyana, and samadhi naturally follow one another and the outcomes of this process.

* Dharana – Concentration: The practice of focusing the mind on a single object. At this stage, there is still some mental distraction.

* Dhyana – Meditation: Distraction has given way to a steady flow. The knowledge of the object flows effortlessly.

* Samadhi – State of Oneness: The meditator has disappeared. There is complete unity with the meditation object.

Osho says the following about meditation and samadhi: "Reaching meditation is not a matter of time; it is a matter of will. If your will is complete, meditation can happen at any moment. Deepen your will, clarify your will, gather your will. Then meditation will naturally come knocking at your door. As long as meditation is absent, your mind will torment you. The mind is simply another name for the absence of meditation—just as darkness is the absence of light. It is the same thing. When light arrives, darkness disappears. When meditation comes, the mind fades away. So, dive into meditation right now. Samadhi, the continuation of meditation, will naturally emerge."

Sutra 3.4

Trayam ekatra samyamah

Trayam: These three (dharana, dhyana, samadhi)

Ekatra: Naturally coming together, working in unison

Samyamah: Alignment of consciousness

When these three come together, it is called samyama.

Samyama is the integration of disciplines. Regular concentration (dharana) practices lead to meditation (dhyana), and meditation leads to samadhi. The state of consciousness that emerges from the union of these three practices is called samyama.

In Ashtanga Yoga, the first five limbs are external practices, while the last three are internal practices. The duration of progression through these stages is determined by the yogi's experience and effort. Each step takes one deeper than the previous one.

The entire process from dharana to samadhi is called samyama.

Sutra 3.5

Tajjayat prajnalokah

Tat: That, it, its, they, this, these

Jayat: Mastery

Prajnalokah: The light of intuitive knowledge

Through mastery of samyama, one attains the light of intuitive knowledge.

Samyama is a disciplined practice that requires strong willpower. It is the technique practiced by rishis, the enlightened yogis.

Through samyama, they have attained all the knowledge they need about God and the universe on their own. The knowledge they acquire is different from that of scientists. Scientists gain knowledge through intellect, reasoning, and research. Some of this knowledge may change over time as new studies emerge.

However, rishis have transcended the level of the mind. The intuitive knowledge they attain is unchanging and represents absolute truth.

Prajna represents transcendent knowledge, intuitive wisdom.

The mind has transitioned from rajasic to sattvic, allowing the light of pure knowledge to emerge. Yoga, Ayurveda, all the Vedas, astrology, Sanskrit grammar, and all other knowledge necessary for a person to discover their true identity have been attained through this path.

Sutra 3.6

Tasya bhumishu viniyogah

Tasya: Onun

Bhumishu: Adım adım, aşağıdan yukarıya

Viniyogah: Gelişme, bütünleşme

Samyama has different levels, and progress through these levels must occur step by step.

Samyama is very powerful and effective. For this reason, a person must have a strong foundation to handle its power. Even spiritually advanced individuals are advised not to rush in this practice.

For a building to rise and remain standing, it needs a solid foundation. The same applies to yoga. Otherwise, a person may be harmed, or they may become enchanted by the mystical powers that come with these practices and lose their way. That is why the initial steps of yoga must be put into practice in daily life. It is said, "Follow the path of yoga because yoga is the best teacher."

Sutra 3.7

Trayam antarangam purvebhyah

Trayam: These three (dharana, dhyana, samadhi)

Antarangam: Inner practice

Purvebhyah: According to the previous practice

In the eightfold yoga practice, these three are more internal compared to the previous practices.

Yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, and pratyahara practices are related to the external world.

Yama is related to the organs of action; niyama to the sense organs; asana to the physical body; pranayama to the physiological structure and energy; and pratyahara to the purification of the mind. These practices concern social and bodily matters. Including our bodies, they are related to the external world.

The more internal dharana develops and sharpens intelligence and the mind, dhyana purifies consciousness, and samadhi elevates consciousness to the soul. These three are much more subtle and delicate practices.

The first five steps are very valuable and form the foundation for reaching the three mentioned stages. Because to remain firmly in samadhi, one must have a matured and developed structure.

In the next sutra, an even more subtle state, nirbija samadhi, is mentioned.

Sutra 3.8

Tadapi bahirangam nirbijasya

Tad: That, it, its, they, this, this one, its, these

Api: Likewise, along with this, also, even, furthermore

Bahirangam: External practice

Nirbijasya: Samadhi without an object, nirbija samadhi

Samyama, when compared to nirbija samadhi (objectless samadhi), remains external.

In the state of samyama, there is an external object or form and its knowledge. Here, it is about gaining insight into the depths of the realms of Prakriti, and through this, acquiring not only knowledge but also mystical powers. All attainments gained through samyama serve as a means for a person to be convinced of their own inner strength. However, the goal and purpose are not to become the master of the realms of Prakriti and remain attached to them.

In nirbija samadhi, the realms of Prakriti are abandoned, and the final, more subtle stage is reached. Here, the highest samadhi is experienced, where there is no object, no subject—only Atman, shining in its pure light.

This is the level where the yogi's liberation becomes possible.

Sutra 3.9

Vyutthana nirodha samskaryoh abhibhava pradurbha- vau nirodhakshana chittanvayah nirodhaparinamah

Vyutthana: Rising and withdrawing thoughts

Nirodha: Erasing, withdrawing

Samskaryoh: Subconscious impressions

Abhibhava: Eliminating, removing

Pradurbhavau: Emerging, appearing

Kshana: Moment

Chitta: Mind, consciousness (the field encompassing all layers of the mind, including thoughts, emotions, memories, intellect, and ego)

Anvayah: Union, merging

Parinamah: Transformation

To control and stop the subconscious impressions that rise and withdraw in the mind, another thought wave is created. The practice of making this wave permanent is called nirodha parinama .

Here, unwanted thought forms in the mind are suppressed by another thought form. In other words, one wave is controlled by another wave.

This is different from the state of samadhi, where all waves disappear, but it is still a powerful practice for controlling the mind. Ultimately, the goal is to free the mind from disturbing thoughts.

Chanting a mantra is a suitable method for experiencing nirodha parinama because the continuously repeated mantra suppresses other waves in the mind.

Sutra 3.10

Tasya prasantavahita samskarat

Tasya: Its, of it (referring to nirodha parinama)

Prasanta: Peaceful, calm, relaxed

Vahita: Flowing

Samskarat: Repeating, turning into a habit

When nirodha parinama practices are continuously repeated, the flow of peace in the mind is ensured, and eventually, this becomes a habit.

The mind tends to repeat a state it has once experienced because recreating it feels safe and easy for it.

The mind continuously seeks to repeat both the positive and the negative. Some people ask, “Why do things always go wrong for me?” The reason is their own mind, which constantly creates negativity. It is in a person’s own hands to transform the mind—and therefore life—into positivity.

Now, Patanjali offers this formula to us to empty the mind and prepare it for samadhi. Once nirodha parinama is discovered, repeating it becomes easy. In this state, by extending the duration of the newly formed thought wave, a trained mind is achieved.

Sutra 3.11

Sarvarthata ekagratayoh kshaya udayau chittasya sa- madhi parinamah

Sarvarthata: Scattered, unfocused, restless mind

Ekagratayah: Single-pointed focus

Kshaya: Disappearance, dissolution

Udayau: Rising, emerging

Chittasya: Of the mind (the field encompassing all layers of the mind, including thoughts, emotions, memories, intellect, and ego)

Samadhi: Integration, complete absorption

Parinamah: Transformation

When a scattered and therefore restless mind becomes capable of focusing on a single point, it is called a mind transformed into samadhi.

A confused mind describes a state where thoughts are uncontrolled, and many different thoughts rush in. This is an untrained, unrefined mind. Most people's minds are in this state. However, those who practice yoga and become aware of the nature of the mind can transform this state.

With transformation, the rush of thoughts can be calmed. A mind occupied with multiple thoughts can be trained through concentration practices, allowing it to become fixed on a single thought.

In the previous sutra, the practice of nirodha parinama was explained, stating that through this practice, the mind can be prepared for samadhi. In this sutra, samadhi parinama, meaning "transformation into samadhi," is discussed, and a mind that has achieved single-pointed focus is now ready for this state.

Sutra 3.12

Tatah punah santa uditau tulya pratyayau chittasya ekagrata parinamah

Tatah: Therefore, from this, thus, as a result

Punah: Again, once more

Santa: Suppressed, silenced

Uditau: Emerging, rising

Tulya: Identical, the same

Pratyayau: Content of the mind

Chittasya: Of the mind (the field encompassing all layers of the mind, including thoughts, emotions, memories, intellect, and ego)

Ekagrata: Single-pointed focus

Parinamah: Transformation

When the thought waves that arise and disappear in the mind become identical, this is called ekagrata parinama, meaning a mind transformed into single-pointed focus.

If the rising and withdrawing thoughts are identical, it means the chaos of thoughts has ended. Here, the mind has completely calmed, and its activities are under control.

In the previous sutras, the turbulence of mental waves was calmed through effort by focusing on a single wave. However, at this stage, there is no longer any effort; the state has naturally become the norm. All thoughts that arise and fade in a person's mind now express a single point. This is ekagrata parinama.

Sutra 3.13

Etena bhutendriyesu dharma lakshana avastha parinamah vyakhayatah

Etena: With this, by this

Bhuta: Elements

Indriyesu: Sense organs

Dharma: Quality, attribute, characteristic

Lakshana: Visible form, appearance, character

Avastha: Conditions, state

Parinamah: Transformation

Vyakhayatah: Explained

Following this, the elements and the sense organs associated with them also undergo transformation in terms of qualities, characteristics, and conditions.

In the previous sutras, the three types of parinama (transformation) of the mind were explained. Here, it is described how, with a refined mind, the elements and sense organs also undergo transformation naturally. As these change, a person's perception of the external world and their entire life also change.

Sutra 3.14

Santa udita avyapadesya dharma anupati dharmi

Santa: Hidden, remaining in the background

Udita: Rising, emerging

Avyapadesya: Indefinite, unclear

Dharma: Attribute, characteristic

Anupati: Associated with, related to, corresponding

Dharmi: The essence of attributes

The attributes of things always remain the same, but when these attributes are surpassed and left behind, when they emerge, or when they are still undefined, they are perceived as different things.

According to Buddhism and Vedanta philosophy, nothing is real. The mind creates things. Everything is an illusion or a dream. However, according to the Samkhya philosophy, in which yoga originated, the world and everything visible are real. Yoga explains that the essence of everything has always existed.

When an object appears in different states, it is perceived as if it changes. However, its permanent reality, its essence, never changes. For example, when looking at the sky on a cloudy day, what is perceived are the clouds. However, the water droplets that evaporated from the ocean have turned into clouds, and when the time comes, they will fall as rain. The cloud, the ocean, and the rain are perceived as different things, yet their essence is one and the same.

Sutra 3.15

Krama anyatvam parinama anyatve hetuh

Krama: Sequence, flow

Anyatvam: Separation, difference

Parinama: Transformation

Anyatve: In the difference

Hetuh: To cause, the cause

Transformation occurs within a different flow depending on the inherent nature of each type.

The law of transformation applies at every level of nature. This transformation, which encompasses all forms of existence, both concrete and abstract, occurs through a series of changes based on the structure of each species. Change takes place in a sequence, from seed to flower, and one day the flower decays, becoming a seed again and mixing with the soil.

Spiritually advanced yogis understand that due to this transformation and change, nothing is permanent, and therefore, all attachments must be relinquished.

Sutra 3.16

Parinama traya samyamat atita anagata jnanam

Parinama: Transformation

Traya: Triple, threefold

Samyamat: Through the practice of Samyama

Atita: Past

Anagata: Future

Jnanam: Knowledge

By practicing samyama on the transformation of time, one can gain knowledge about the past and the future.

When samyama is practiced in the present moment, the natural flow coming from the past can be understood, and through this, the way the future is constructed becomes clear.

From this sutra up to Sutra 50, extraordinary mystical powers are discussed. It is important to note that these mystical powers can create obstacles to liberation. Individuals may become distracted by the allure of these powers and lose their way. Moreover, focusing on such feats does not aid in a person's enlightenment.

So why did Patanjali dedicate such a large section to this?

Maybe in ancient times, people used yoga to attain extraordinary powers, so mystical powers are a topic that cannot be overlooked. Or perhaps Patanjali himself possesses all these powers and, in the end, he also abandoned them, returning to peace and truth.

Sutra 3.17

Sabda artha pratyayanam itaretaradhyasat sankarah tat pravibhaga samyamat sarva bhuta ruta jnanam

Sabda: Word

Artha: Meaning

Pratyayanam: Interpretation behind the meaning

Itaretaradhyasat: Intermingling in the mind

Sankarah: Confusion, mixture

Tat: That, it, its, they, this, this one, its, these

Pravibhaga: Their difference, distinction

Samyamat: Through the practice of samyama

Sarva: All, whole

Bhuta: Beings, living entities

Ruta: Speech

Jnanam: Knowledge

A word, its meaning, and the interpretation behind its meaning have become mixed in the mind. However, a yogi, through the practice of samyama, distinguishes them from each other and thus is able to understand the language of all beings.

Words have meanings, and these meanings also carry different images hidden in people's subconscious minds. For example, the word "clever" has one meaning, but for some, it may suggest being intelligent, while for others, it may imply deceiving others. Similarly, in the context of a woman-man relationship, jealousy may be interpreted as an expression of love for some, while for others, it may be seen as a sign of a lack of self-confidence.

In daily life, these concepts get mixed up because they are perceived together.

A yogi, through samyama on the words or sounds that come from a being's mouth, enters into each of these concepts individually.

For example, a yogi may dive deep enough into the sound of a female bird's call to recognize the image of a male bird and the desire she has for him. In this way, one can gain the ability to understand the language of living beings.

Sutra 3.18

Samskara sakshatkaranat purva jati jnanam

Samskara: Deepest impressions in the mind, subconscious impressions

Sakshat: Directly

Karanat: Perception

Purva: Previous

Jati: Births

Jnanam: Knowledge

The direct perception of the subconscious impressions provides a person with the knowledge of their past lives.

The cause of karmas lies in the impressions accumulated in a person's subconscious, known as samskaras. Knowing these samskaras presents an opportunity to eliminate the karmas. This is because a yogi progressing on the path of enlightenment knows that these samskaras are like clouds that obscure the way.

Deep meditations performed with a sattvic mind lead a person to the information in their subconscious. In this way, the person gains the opportunity to access the karmas carried over from their past lives.

Sutra 3.19

Pratyayasya parachitta jnanam

Pratyayasya: Some qualities related to the content of the mind

Para: Others

Chitta: Mind, consciousness (the field encompassing all layers of the mind, including thoughts, emotions, memories, intellect, and ego)

Jnanam: Knowledge

By practicing samyama on the mind and consciousness, one can gain knowledge about some qualities related to the content of others' minds.

If samyama is practiced on a person's thoughts or ideas, complete knowledge about the structure of the mind that produced that thought or idea can be attained.

A person's views and thoughts can never be entirely objective. Thoughts take shape according to a person's mental state. Therefore, by practicing samyama on their thought patterns, one can understand what kind of mind and personality a person has, such as whether they are jealous, virtuous, malicious, or compassionate.

Sutra 3.20

Na cha tat salambanam tasya avishayi bhutatvat

Na: Not

Cha: And

Tat: That, it, its, they, this, this one, its, these

Salambanam: With support

Tasya: Its

Avishayi: Beyond consciousness, unperceivable

Bhutatvat: By the nature of existence

However, one cannot have an understanding of the subconscious itself that produces this knowledge.

In the previous sutra, it was stated that a person's thoughts are objective and reflect the individual. Here, it is explained that while one can gain knowledge of a person's mental structure, this is not enough to understand the deeper reality of their subconscious.

Note: This sutra is not found in some sources while in others, it is considered together with Sutra 19 of this section.

Sutra 3.21

Kaya rupa samyamat tadgrahyasakti stambhe chakshuh prakasa asamprayoge antardhanam

Kaya: Body

Rupa: Form

Samyamat: Through the practice of samyama

Tadgrahyasakti: Its perceiving energy

Stambhe: To suspend

Chakshuh: Eye

Prakasa: Light, brightness

Asamprayoge: Inability to establish connection

Antardhanam: Becoming invisible

By practicing samyama on the body's form and blocking the light it emits, a person becomes invisible.

By focusing on their own body through samyama, a person halts the light that allows them to be seen, making them invisible to others.

Previously, the relationship between the elements and the sense organs was discussed. The body is made up of the five elements.

The visibility of the body is made possible by the light emanating from it. The fire element carries both the qualities of fire and light. The formation and visibility of the body are related to the fire element. The location of this element is the third chakra, which is in the abdominal area.

When samyama is practiced on this area of the body and the light within it, the light can be dimmed. As a result, the person becomes invisible to others. The body remains in place, but it has become invisible.

Sutra 3.22

Etena sabdadi antardhanam uktam

Etena: With this

Sabda: Sound

Adi: And others

Antardhanam: Disappear, be obstructed

Uktam: To describe, to explain

This method explains that sound and other senses can also be obstructed.

Using the method described in the above sutra, other senses can also be eliminated. In other words, a person can not only become invisible but also render themselves inaudible and untouchable.

Sutra 3.23

Sopakramam nirupakramam cha karma tatsamyam- mat aparanta jnanam arishtebyah va

Sopakramam: In a short time, immediately

Nirupakramam: Over a long time

Cha: And

Karma: Action, result of the action

Tatsamyamat: To practice samyama on it

Aparanta: Death

Jnanam: Knowledge

Arishtebyah: Through omen or sign

Va: Or

Karmas can manifest immediately, or it may take a long time for them to unfold. By practicing samyama on the karmas or the signs of the state of death, one can gain knowledge about the time of death.

A person's lifespan is determined by the sum of their karmas. By practicing samyama on the karmas being lived, one can trace them back to their sources. From there, by following the traces, knowledge about the time of death can be attained.

Additionally, by practicing samyama on the signs of death, such as the loss of function in the senses, changes in the breath, or the collapse of internal organs, the time of death can also be known.

This is an important matter. In the Bhagavad Gita, it is written that the thought passing through the mind at the time of death will determine the next life. Therefore, yogis wish to know the day and time of their death.

Sutra 3.24

Maitryadishu balani

Maitry: Friendship, companionship

Adishu: And others (virtues)

Balani: Superior, great power

By practicing samyama on friendship or other virtues, great power is gained in that area.

By practicing samyama on topics such as friendship, compassion, courage, love, etc., one goes to the source of the emotion and gains the full energy of that emotion. In this way, the person acquires such a power in that area that they can instill these virtues in everyone they come into contact with.

The yogi's mind influences other minds. Both the yogi themselves and those around them benefit greatly from this.

Sutra 3.25

Baleshu hasti baladini

Baleshu: Power, strength (to practice samyama on)

Hasti: Elephant

Baladini: The strength of the elephant and other qualities

The elephant is strong and also possesses other qualities. By practicing samyama on these qualities, one can acquire them.

The elephant is both strong and resilient, as well as a noble creature.

Samyama is the deepest form of concentration. Practicing samyama on an object is like copying it and multiplying it, thereby possessing it. Therefore, practicing samyama on the qualities of the elephant means reaching the source of the energy that constitutes the elephant and drawing those powers onto oneself.

Sutra 3.26

Pravrtti aloka nyasat sukshma vyavahita viprakrsta jnanam

Pravrtti: Beyond normal senses

Aloka: Light

Nyasat: To direct towards it, to practice samyama on it

Sukshma: Subtle, so fine it cannot be perceived by the five senses

Vyavahita: Hidden, secret

Viprakrsta: Distant, remote

Jnanam: Knowledge

By practicing samyama on light, one can transcend the senses and access hidden or distant knowledge.

When referring to light, it speaks of the inner light, the light in the heart. When samyama is practiced on the light of the heart, subtle information that the sense organs cannot reach is revealed. These are insights that come through intuition. Once the eye of the heart is opened, no secret remains hidden, and the significance of distances fades away.

It is said that the source of true knowledge lies within the individual. The knowledge gained through the heart is true knowledge. This type of knowledge does not recognize the boundaries and obstacles imposed by the material world, because its source is not the external world, but the infinite and boundless one.

Sutra 3.27

Bhuvana jnanam surye samyamat

Bhuvana: Different regions of creation, solar systems

Jnanam: Knowledge

Surye: On the sun

Samyamat: To practice samyama

By practicing samyama on the Sun, the knowledge of all worlds is attained.

In sutras 27, 28, and 29, practicing samyama on the Sun, the Moon, and the Pole Star is explained. The Sun represents the formation of systems in the universe; the Moon signifies the arrangement of stars; and the Pole Star illustrates the law of motion.

When a person practices samyama on the Sun, they gain knowledge about both the solar systems on the physical plane and the Sun's role in the spiritual world.

There are many solar systems in the universe. Each of them is both independent from one another and interconnected, as they all originate from the same source. All solar systems are expressions of a single truth. Their source is the same.

Solar systems represent life, and the source of life is Ishvara, the supreme consciousness. All forms of life and consciousness at different levels are connected to Ishvara and express it.

The body is also a solar system because whatever exists in the macrocosm also exists in the microcosm. When a person focuses on the Sun through samyama, the knowledge of the seven worlds flows to them. This also corresponds to the seven cosmic centers within the body.

Sutra 3.28

Chandre taravyuha jnanam

Chandre: Moon

Tara: Stars

Vyuha: System, arrangement

Jnanam: Knowledge

By practicing samyama on the Moon, the knowledge of the positions and arrangements of the stars is attained.

In the infinite universe, many solar systems and galaxies exist in a certain order. The movements of stars, planets, and satellites, both within themselves and in the universe, follow a specific system.

When a person is born, the positions of the Sun and the Moon, as well as their relationships with other stars, are highly significant. Astrology also studies this information.

Practicing samyama on the Moon reveals the connection between the arrangement of the stars and the alignment of emotions and thoughts.

Sutra 3.29

Dhruve tadgati jnanam

Dhruve: North Star

Tad: That, it, its, they, this, these

Gati: Movement

Jnanam: Knowledge

Practicing samyama on the North Star reveals knowledge about the law of movement.

To understand movement, a fixed reference point is needed. The motion of all surrounding objects is determined by observing this reference point. Similarly, the movement of the stars in the sky is understood by looking at the stationary North Star.

The North Star is a symbol of the law of motion on Earth. By practicing samyama on the North Star and understanding the law of motion, a person also comprehends the law of destiny. In this way, they not only learn about their own destiny but also the fate of those around them and even that of the Earth.

Sutra 3.30

Nabhi chakre kaya vyuha jnanam

Nabhi: Navel

Chakre: Chakra, energy center in the body

Kaya: Physical body

Vyuha: System, arrangement, formation

Jnanam: Knowledge

When samyama is practiced on the navel region (Manipura Chakra), knowledge of the body's functioning system is attained.

According to yogic knowledge, the navel is the central point of all nerves. It is the root of 72,000 nadis, or energy channels, and also governs the body's sympathetic nervous system. The navel region is also known as the Solar Plexus.

Just as practicing samyama on the Sun reveals the secrets of the entire solar system, practicing samyama on this region of the body unveils knowledge of the body's entire functioning system.

Sutra 3.31

Kantha kupe kshut pipasa nivrttih

Kantha: Throat

Kupe: Cavity

Ksut: Hunger

Pipasa: Thirst

Nvrttih: Subduing, eliminating

By practicing samyama on the throat cavity, the sensations of hunger and thirst are subdued .

Through specific breathing techniques and samyama, one gains mastery over the energies in the Throat Chakra. This chakra operates with ether energy. By working with the Throat Chakra, also known as Vishuddha Chakra, the sensations of hunger and thirst can be eliminated.

In his book Autobiography of a Yogi, Paramahansa Yogananda mentions a yogi who sustains himself solely on ether energy, living without eating or drinking anything.

Sutra 3.32

Kurmanadyam sthairyam

Kurmanadyam: Kurma Nadi, one of the minor channels in the pranic body

Sthairyam: Motionless, stillness

By practicing samyama on the Kurma Nadi, the body is brought into a state of stillness.

Kurma means turtle. Kurma Nadi is located just below the throat and has a turtle-like shape.

Kurma Nadi is associated with blinking. The stillness of the eyes is, in fact, connected to the stillness of the mind and body.

Those who practice asanas are well aware of this. All balance postures require a steady gaze. In daily life, when people are deeply immersed in thought, their gaze naturally becomes fixed.

By practicing samyama on this nadi, the body can be brought under control, allowing it to remain motionless. This makes it easier to stay in meditation for extended periods.

Sutra 3.33

Murdha jyotishi siddha darsanam

Murdha: Crown of the head

Jyotishi: On light

Siddha: Great yogis with mystical powers

Darsanam: Vision, field of view

By practicing samyama on the light at the crown of the head, one enters the field of vision of great yogis.

By practicing samyama on the crown of the head, Sahasrara, or the Crown Chakra, one enters the realm of the Siddhas. Siddhas are great yogis who are no longer bound by the necessity of taking a physical body. They continue to exist at higher levels of consciousness.

When a yogi connects with that realm through samyama, they gain access to the intuitive knowledge inspired by the Siddhas. This intuitive knowledge helps facilitate the yogi's personal growth and development.

Sutra 3.34

Pratibhad va sarvam

Pratibhad: Intuitive, spontaneously arising knowledge

Va: Or

Sarvam: All, everything

Or, all knowledge may spontaneously flow to the person.

This sutra should be considered together with the previous one. In the previous sutra, it was explained that by practicing samyama on the Crown Chakra, one can attain yogic knowledge. Here, it is mentioned that sometimes higher knowledge can come to a person spontaneously, without any effort.

Yoga teaches us the value of effort and devotion. If a person attains knowledge effortlessly, it is undoubtedly the result of merit and an exceptional karma that has reached them at the right time.

Sutra 3.35

Hrdaye chitta samvit

Hrdaye: Heart

Chitta: Mind, consciousness (the field encompassing thoughts, emotions, memories, intellect, and ego)

Samvit: Complete knowledge

By practicing samyama on the heart, one attains complete knowledge of the contents and structure of the mind.

The Anahata Chakra, located in the heart, is a crucial center for meditation. Through meditation on the heart, the mind undergoes a transformation. This transformation allows the mind to access transcendent and intuitive knowledge. This is the true nature of the mind.

These practices guide a person toward the subtle refinement needed to practice samyama on Purusha, the soul. This subject is explored in the next sutra.

Sutra 3.36

Sattva Purushayoh atyanta samkirnayoh pratyaya avisesah bhogah parathatvat svarthasamyamat Purusha jnanam

Sattva: Purity and clarity as a quality; luminous, clear mind
Purushayoh: The essence beyond everything
Atyanta: Absolute
Samkirnayoh: Separate, distinct
Pratyaya: Awareness
Avisesha: Still unseen, undefined
Bhogah: Worldly experiences
Parathatvat: Separate, different from one another
Svartha: As it is
Samyamat: Practicing samyama
Purusha: Pure consciousness, supreme awareness, soul, true self
Jnanam: Knowledge

By practicing samyama on the sattvic mind, it becomes clear that it is distinct from the Purusha (the soul). Even though the mind is pure and luminous, it remains active and continues to generate worldly experiences.

This sutra should be considered together with the previous one. In Sutra 35, it was stated that by practicing samyama on the heart, the true nature of the mind would be revealed. The true nature of the mind is Sattva—purity, clarity, and luminosity.

By practicing samyama on the refined sattvic mind, it becomes clear that it is still the mind and not Purusha, the soul. Even the most purified and subtle sattvic mind belongs to Prakriti, nature. It is an elevated state of nature, yet it remains a part of it. Purusha, however, is beyond nature—it is supernatural, transcendent. Its light is constant and unchanging.

When combined with the previous sutra, it becomes clear that a person who fully understands the nature of the mind in all its aspects naturally seeks to go beyond the worldly and comprehend the soul. Only at that point does one become capable of practicing samyama on Purusha. Practicing samyama on Purusha grants the knowledge of the soul.

Sutra 3.37

Tatah pratibha sravana vedana adarsa asvada varta jayante

Tatah: Therefore, thereafter, thus, as a result
Pratibha: Spiritual perception, intuitive insight
Sravana: Extraordinary sense of hearing
Vedana: Extraordinary sense of touch
Adarsa: Extraordinary sense of sight
Asvada: Extraordinary sense of taste
Varta: Extraordinary sense of smell
Jayante: To emerge, to manifest

As a result, intuition becomes so powerful that the senses reach a supernatural level; extraordinary sounds, tastes, smells, and sensations, as well as extraordinary visions, begin to manifest.

Continuing from the previous sutra, when one surpasses even the sattvic mind and becomes adept enough to practice samyama on Purusha, certain extraordinary abilities begin to emerge. Due to the

heightened development of intuitive perception, various forms of extrasensory awareness manifest. These are senses far deeper than what the physical sensory organs can perceive.

The person hears transcendental sounds, feels textures without physical touch, sees supernatural visions, and begins to experience extraordinary tastes and smells beyond the ordinary realm.

Sutra 3.38

Te samadhau upasargah vyutthane siddhayah

Te: These (These extraordinary powers)

Samadhau: In Samadhi

Upasargah: Obstacle

Vyutthane: Worldly attainments

Siddhayah: Attaining perfection, possessing extraordinary powers

These extraordinary powers may seem like significant achievements from a worldly perspective, but in reality, they become obstacles to attaining samadhi.

Such powerful abilities can be overwhelming. A person may become captivated by the brilliance of their extraordinary powers and veer off onto a completely different path. This is because these supernatural abilities often attract great attention and admiration from others.

When prestige and praise increase, if one becomes attached to these accolades, it becomes very difficult to break free. A yogi must remain unaffected by both praise and criticism, maintaining balance and inner stillness.

In the 12th sutra of the first chapter, the importance of vairagya (detachment) was emphasized. Detachment means appreciating all the worldly blessings one possesses but never becoming attached to them. There should be nothing on earth that one cannot renounce. The transient nature of the world demands this understanding.

If a person becomes attached to these new abilities and identifies with them, they stray from the true path. However, a yogi must recognize that all these powers are gifts given by nature as a result of their practice. They are not the goal but merely tools used on the path to liberation.

Sutra 3.39

Bandha karana saithilyat pracara samvedanat cha chittasya parasariravesah

Bandha: Lock, attachment

Karana: Cause

Saithilyat: Relaxation, loosening

Pracara: Pathway, passage

Samvedanat: Through knowledge

Cha: And

Chittasya: Of the mind (the field encompassing thoughts, emotions, memories, intellect, and ego)

Para: Another, someone else

Sarira: Body

Avesah: Entering

By loosening attachment to their own body and deeply understanding the workings of the mind, a person can enter another's body.

Attachments are created by karmas. At the beginning of the second chapter, the kleshas that cause karmas were explained. A yogi can untie the bonds that bind them to embodiment through their knowledge. Thus, they can liberate themselves from the compulsion of karmas and leave their body by their own will.

Additionally, since a yogi has a deep understanding of the nadis, the energy channels that form the connection between the mind and the body, they are able to dissolve their body. If they wish to transfer into another body, they can easily achieve this by performing samyama on the desired body.

Great yogis have performed this process to heal the illness of the person whose body they use or to aid in that person's enlightenment.

Sutra 3.40

Udanajayat jala panka kankadishu asangah utkrantih cha

Udana: Upward-moving energy. Ud means "up."

Jayat: Mastery

Jala: Water

Panka: Mud

Kanta: Thorn

Kadisu: And similar things

Asangah: Not touching

Utkrantih: Levitation, rising

Cha: And

When a yogi masters Udana prana, they can walk without sinking into water or mud and without touching thorns. They can even levitate.

In his book Pranayama Dr. Nagendra writes: "There are five pranas, or five energies, that govern the body. Just as an emperor rules a country with five ministers, Brahman governs the body with five pranas." These are:

- 1- Prana is related to inhalation and is located in the chest region.
- 2- Apana is related to exhalation and is located in the rectal region.
- 3- Samana is related to digestion and is located in the abdominal region.
- 4- Udana is responsible for the body's physiological functions and is located in the throat region.
- 5- Vyana is related to circulation, spreads throughout the body, and has no specific location.

Udana works from bottom to top. It carries energy from the base of the spine to the head region. When one masters Udana prana through samyama on this upward flow, a sense of lightness is attained.

The yogi becomes so light while walking that they neither sink into water or mud nor are pricked by thorns. Udana prana also enables one to be unaffected by gravity. Thus, levitation, the act of rising from the ground, occurs.

Udana carries energy from the bottom to the top of the sushumna channel. It also facilitates the separation of the individual soul from the body at the time of death. Dr. Nagendra, in his book Pranayama, writes, "After death, it is Udana that carries the good to realms of goodness and the wicked to realms of wickedness."

Sutra 3.41

Samana jayat jvalanam

Samana: One of the five pranas

Jayat: Mastery

Jvalanam: Emitting light, shining

When samyama is practiced on Samana prana, the body shines and emits light.

Samana prana is related to the Manipura (navel) chakra and the fire element. It also represents the digestive fire.

Fire provides both burning and illumination. Instead of focusing directly on the fire element, it is easier to practice samyama on the region where it resides. When samyama is performed on this area, centered around the navel, the body begins to emit light. It is said that in ancient times, yogis living in forests illuminated their surroundings at night with the light produced from their own bodies.

Sutra 3.42

Srotra akashayoh sambandha samyamat divyam srotram

Srotra: Related to hearing and the ear

Akashayoh: Ether element, space, akasha

Sambandha: Related to each other

Samyamat: Practicing samyama

Divyam: Sacred, divine

Srotram: Hearing organ, the power of hearing

When samyama is practiced on the relationship between the sense of hearing and the ether element, divine sounds are heard.

Ether, space, void, and akasha are words used for the same purpose. The ether element is one of the five elements that make up the universe. As remembered, the others are air, fire, water, and earth. Each of these elements is also related to the five senses and the five sense organs.

The ether element is related to hearing and the ear. When samyama is practiced in this relationship, mastery is attained. As a result, extraordinary, sacred, and divine sounds from akasha begin to be heard.

There is not much difference between the physical plane and the metaphysical plane when it comes to capturing sounds, as space itself is already a subtle concept. The sound vibrations in the physical plane exist as finer vibrations in the metaphysical plane. Through samyama, a yogi who attains these subtle vibrations gains access to the refined and hidden knowledge behind the principle of hearing.

Sutra 3.43

Kaya akasayoh sambandha samyamat laghutulasa- mapatteh cha akasha gamanam

Akasayoh: Ether element, space, akasha

Sambandha: Relationship

Samyamat: Through samyama

Laghu: Lightness

Tula: Cotton thread

Samapatteh: Becoming one with it

Ca: And

Gamanam: Moving along with it

Practicing samyama on the relationship between akasha and the body allows a person to become as light as a cotton thread. With this lightness, they can travel through the air to any place they desire.

Swami Vivekananda writes the following about akasha in Raja Yoga: "According to Indian philosophy, the entire universe is formed through combinations of akasha and prana. Among these, akasha is omnipresent and all-pervading. All forms arise from the transformations of akasha. Air comes from akasha, liquid comes from akasha, solid matter comes from akasha. The Sun, the Earth, the Moon, and the stars... Everything comes from akasha."

Since the body is essentially composed of akasha, when a yogi practices samyama on the relationship between the two, they become one with the lightness of akasha. Freed from the heaviness of the earth, they become as light as a cotton thread and can travel anywhere without spatial limitations. This is called "akasha gamanam." It is one of the well-known siddhis, or mystical powers.

This journey is not like a bird flying in the sky. Through the power of samyama, the yogi dissolves the combinations that make up their body and moves through space, reassembling them upon reaching the desired destination.

In the 40th sutra of this section, levitation was described. However, what is explained here is not just rising from the ground or floating but traveling through the air.

Sutra 3.44

Bahih akalpita vrttih mahavideha tatah prakasavarana kshayah

Bahih: Dışsal

Akalpita: Hayal edilemez, tasavvur edilemez

Vrttih: Zihindeki düşünce dalgaları

Maha: Yüce

Videha: Bedensizlik hali

Tatah: Bu nedenle, bundan sonra, böylece, sonuç olarak Prakasa: Işık, aydınlık

Avarana: Perdelemek, örtmek

Kshayah: Silmek, yok etmek

By practicing samyama on the state of supreme disembodiment (maha videha), a person can detach their mind from the limitations of the body. Thus, the veil that obstructs enlightenment disappears.

The mind is limited by the human body. However, a yogi understands well the universal nature of the mind and that the cosmic mind is independent of the body.

In the 19th sutra of the first chapter, the concept of videha was discussed. Videhas are exalted beings who no longer need the body. Maha videha is the state of supreme disembodiment. Through samyama on this topic, the yogi can experience the state of disembodiment. During this experience, the ego, sense organs, and elements disappear. In this state, one is completely free from mental and physical suffering.

At this independent level, chitta, or the waves in the mind, become sacred and universal. Thus, the illusionary veil that obstructs the person's path to enlightenment is also removed.

Sutra 3.45

Sthula svarupa sukshma anvaya arthavattva samyamad bhutajayah

Sthula: Gross, material form

Svarupa: One's true essence, own nature

Sukshma: So subtle it cannot be perceived by the five senses

Anvaya: Their interrelations

Arthavattva: Their purpose of existence

Samyamad: To practice samyama

Bhuta: Elements

Jayah: Mastery, to become the master of something

By practicing samyama on the five elements, mastery is achieved over their material forms, subtle states, connections with each other, and their purposes. Mastery in this area grants control over the elements.

The five elements form the universe and everything within it. The essence of everything is made up of ether, air, fire, water, and earth. The different combinations of these five elements manifest in various forms.

A yogi practices samyama on the material forms, subtle states, compositions, how they spread, and the purpose behind the existence of the elements. In doing so, they uncover the secret of the elements. By uncovering the secret of the elements that make up nature, the yogi gains mastery over them and, consequently, over nature itself.

There are many stories about this. According to what Svaroopananda writes in the Raja Yoga Pradipika, hundreds of disciples gather at a train station to welcome a great yogi. One of them gives the yogi a bag containing a handful of peanuts. The yogi puts his hand into the bag and starts distributing the peanuts to those who came to greet him. This act symbolizes the yogi's blessing of his disciples. The people present are astonished to see that the peanuts in the bag never seem to run out, as every time the yogi reaches into the bag, another handful of peanuts appears.

Just as the great yogi did, it is possible to materialize any form composed of elements through the power of samyama.

Sutra 3.46

Tatah animadi pradurbhavah kayasampat taddharma anabhighatah cha

Tatah: Therefore, hence, as a result

Animadi: To shrink and other such powers

Pradurbhavat: To manifest, to appear

Kayasampat: Perfection of the body

Tad: That, it, him, her, them, this, this one, these

Dharma: Quality, property

Anabhighatah: Unaffected, unaffected by harm

Cha: And

The person who masters the elements can shrink their perfected body or give it any desired form.

As mentioned before, mastering the elements means submitting nature to one's will. A person gains such control over their body that, using the elements, they can shape their body into any form they desire, overcoming obstacles created by the elements. Through this process, eight types of extraordinary powers are attained:

1. Anima: The power to shrink to the size of an atom
2. Mahima: The power to become as large as a mountain
3. Laghima: The power to become as light as air
4. Garima: The power to become as heavy as iron
5. Prapti: The power to reach anywhere
6. Prakamya: The power to fulfill every desire
7. Ishatva: The power to create
8. Vasitva: The power to have perfect control over anything

Sutra 3.47

Rupa lavanya bala vajra samhanavatvani kayasampat

Rupa: Güzellik

Lavanya: Zarafet, cildin ince ve parlak olması

Bala: Güç

Vajra: Elmas gibi parlak, dayanıklı ve sert olmak

Samhanavatvani: Dayanıklılık

Kaya: Beden

Sampat: Mükemmellik

Thus, the physical body composed of elements acquires such elegance and beauty that it shines and emits light like a diamond. It becomes as durable and hard as a diamond.

As mentioned in the Bhagavad Gita, the nature of the body involves sickness, aging, and death. Due to accumulated karmas, the body is destined for destruction.

However, once the material that makes up the body is conquered, this structure is completely

renewed and transformed. So much so that the yogi can remain this way unless they choose otherwise.

Sutra 3.48

Grahana svarupa asmita anvaya arthavattva samyamat indriyajayah

Grahana: The power of perception

Svarupa: A person's true essence, their nature

Asmita: The sense of self, ego, the feeling of being, forgetting spiritual identity

Anvaya: Union

Arthavattva: The reason for existence

Samyamat: Practicing samyama

Indriya: The five sense organs

Jayah: Mastery, becoming the master

When samyama is practiced on the power of perception, mastery is gained over a person's true essence, ego, the senses, and the purpose of the senses.

In the previous sutras, the perfection of the body was described. Now, the deepening and enrichment of the sense organs related to the elements are being discussed.

Everything we experience in the world passes through the senses and reflects on the feeling of "I." The ego, or the sense of "I," chooses everything according to its preference. By choosing, we mean both desiring (ragah) and rejecting (dvesha). In this way, the ego creates a world for itself. This is the world of maya, or illusion. A person's awakening from this world of illusion to the truth is dependent on their karma.

Yogis who understand this characteristic of nature, or Prakriti, begin to control and train their sense organs. This is because they do not wish to surrender their powers and pleasures to the senses, becoming their slaves. The practices related to this, such as pratyahara (turning the mind inward) and vairagya (renunciation), were discussed earlier.

By practicing samyama on the power of perception, a person understands the relationship between their true essence, ego, and sense organs, and gains deep knowledge about the purpose of this relationship. As a result of this knowledge, the sense organs cease to be directed towards the ego.

Thus, both the sense organs are liberated and their nature is understood, and the channels that feed the ego are dulled. This means removing the obstacles that veil a person's true essence and clearing the path to self-realization.

Sutra 3.49

Tatah manojavitvam vikaranabhavah pradhanajayah cha

Tatah: Therefore, hence, as a result

Manojavitvam: Mental speed, agility of the mind

Vikaranabhavah: Freed from the perception of the senses

Pradhana: The primary cause, the primordial and original state of matter

Jayah: Mastery, becoming the master

Cha: And

When the mind is freed from the perception of the senses and returns to their original state, it gains the speed to instantly manifest everything.

When the hand holding the kite's string relaxes, the kite rises freely in the sky. Similarly, when the bond connecting the ego with the sense organs is broken, the senses return freely to their source that created them. The mind, having become independent, gains incredible speed. Additionally, when the sense organs quiet down, no longer distracted by external objects, and remain still, the mind becomes purified.

In the 26th sutra of this section, when samyama is practiced on the heart, intuitive knowledge coming from beyond the senses was discussed. Similarly, in the 37th sutra, when samyama is practiced on Purusha, sounds, visions, and smells that cannot be reached by the sense organs are described.

In this sutra, in addition to these, the concept of speed that arises from the complete freedom of the mind from the external world is discussed. The mind has the speed to instantly manifest whatever it focuses on in the universe.

At this point, the interest in sensory attraction and fulfillment is completely lost. Each cell now reflects the light of the "pure self." There is an indescribable happiness here.

Sutra 3.50

Sattva Purusha anyata khyatimatrasya sarvabhava adhisthatrtvam sarvajnatrtvam cha

Sattva: Purity, brightness

Purusha: The true self

Anyata: Difference

Khyati: Awareness

Matrasya: Only

Sarva: All, entire

Bhava: Manifestation

Adhisthatrtvam: Sovereignty, supremacy

Sarvajnatrtvam: Omniscience

Cha: And

Only those who know the difference between the sattvic mind and Purusha possess infinite potential and infinite knowledge.

All the sutras above are practices aimed at awakening to the awareness of the truth. In the end, the body and mind are completely purified, freed from all tamasic and rajasic elements, and have returned to their sattvic nature.

This section elaborates on how challenging the practices are and the great gifts that are obtained in the end. At the point reached, the mind has been purified and cleansed enough to reunite with its source.

The yogi, at this level, must realize that the journey is not over and that they are very close to discovering the hidden treasure. No matter how skilled or purified they become, they must understand that the thing being purified is still the mind. What truly matters is to investigate the one who created the mind. Purusha and its splendor rest and are hidden within Prakriti.

This part addresses a very special topic: understanding the difference between the sattvic mind and Purusha. Sattva belongs to Prakriti, while Purusha is beyond Prakriti.

Sutra 3.51

Tad vairagyat api dosha bija kshaye kaivalyam

Tad: That, it, him, her, them, this, this one, these

Vairagyat: To let go, to renounce

Api: Also, moreover, in addition, even

Dosha: Defects, flaws that bind a person

Bija: Seed

Kshaye: To reduce, to gradually eliminate

Kaivalyam: Absolute liberation, true freedom, the realization of union (yoga)

When a person leaves behind the seeds of flaws and attachment, and renounces all the mystical powers they have acquired, they attain true freedom and absolute liberation.

The person who understands the workings of nature and has experienced many extraordinary powers is now at a crossroads. One path is to build their own empire of powers and enjoy it, while the other is to realize that all of these are merely tools and that they no longer need any tools. They then let go of everything and turn toward the truth.

The first path revives certain seeds of evil that lie deep within. Extraordinary powers can lead a person to succumb to their ego. The person may become intoxicated by these powers and completely lose their way.

In this sutra, there is an important warning.

Master Patanjali awakens his student to the dangers that lie ahead. He emphasizes that the path to freedom passes through humility and solitude, and that one should not become trapped by these powers and skills.

The last word of this sutra, "kaivalya," meaning absolute liberation or true freedom, is thus added to the vocabulary of those walking the path of yoga. Kaivalya is the sweet fruit offered by yoga. It is the Sanskrit term for the infinite happiness and freedom that is longed for and awaited.

Sutra 3.52

Sthanyupanimantrane sanga smayakaranam punaranishta prasangat

Sthany: Celestial beings, gods

Upanimantrane: Invitation, to be invited

Sanga: To associate, togetherness

Smaya: To honor, to smile

Akaranam: To avoid, not to accept
Punar: Again, once more
Anishta: Unwanted
Prasangat: To establish a connection

If an invitation comes from celestial beings to a yogi, instead of accepting it with honor, they should avoid it. This is because such invitations can lead to unwanted attachments once again.

Here, there is a much more subtle and different situation being discussed. It refers to high-conscious beings existing in other dimensions. These beings may extend various invitations to the yogi. What could be more enticing to someone who has created otherworldly possibilities while still in the world?

However, Master Patanjali once again gives a warning. The yogi must overcome this obstacle as well and avoid being attracted by any allure.

Sutra 3.53

Kshana tat kramayoh samyamat vivekajam jnanam

Kshana: Moment
Tat: That, it, him, her, them, this, this one, these
Kramayoh: Arrangement, sequencing
Samyamat: By practicing samyama
Vivekajam: Awakening to knowledge, discernment power
Jnanam: Knowledge

Practicing samyama on the smallest unit of time, the moment, grants a person the power and knowledge to discern what is real and what is not.

This path is a different practice for awakening to the truth. To be able to practice samyama on a single moment means understanding that time is a concept arising from the accumulation of moments. This, in turn, reveals the mutable and transient nature of the universe.

At the same time, practicing samyama on the moment means staying in the present. In this case, the past and future vanish. Vivekananda says, "We are not in time and space, time and space are within us."

Practicing samyama on the smallest unit of time, the moment, is not easy. This is because it requires stopping time. However, for a yogi who has traveled so far and acquired many powers, this too becomes possible.

Sutra 3.54

Jati lakshana desaih anyata anavacchedat tulyayoh tatah pratipattih

Jati: Type, race, kind
Lakshana: Distinguishing characteristics
Desaih: Place, condition
Anyata: Separation, difference
Anavacchedat: Unable to be distinguished from one another

Tulyayoh: Similar objects

Tatah: Therefore, hence, as a result

Pratipattih: Understanding, investigating

A person with this knowledge can instantly distinguish the differences between objects that appear identical in terms of type, character traits, and their location.

A mind that is refined enough to follow moments and the flow of these moments comes to understand the original nature of everything. Thus, everything appears to it in its unique and distinct form. Objects that seemed identical are now distinguished by their past and characteristic features.

Sutra 3.55

Tarakam sarvavishayam sarvathavishayam akramam cha iti vivekajam jnanam

Tarakam: The knowledge that liberates a person from bondage, the knowledge that sets them free

Sarva: All, whole

Vishayam: Objects

Sarvatha: Under all conditions

Akramam: A sequence without a time order (timeless)

Cha: And

Iti: Finally, in the end

Viveka: Knowledge gained through discernment

Jnanam: Knowledge

The knowledge that liberates a person encompasses all times, all conditions, and everything. It is entirely internal and intuitive knowledge.

When the highest knowledge is attained, time, the greatest illusion created by the human mind, is completely dissolved. In the concept of truth, time does not exist. The state of timelessness is called infinity.

Viveka, the knowledge that comes when the real is separated from the unreal, and jnana, the knowledge gained through meditation, are types of knowledge that are not like the information taught in schools. These are spontaneous insights that arise from deep meditation, encompassing everything and all conditions.

These are the kinds of knowledge that liberate individuals from the struggles in the ocean of the world and lead them to freedom.

Sutra 3.56

Sattva Purushayoh suddhi samye kaivalyam iti

Sattva: Pure, clear

Purushayoh: Pure consciousness, supreme consciousness, soul, true self

Suddhi: Clean, pure

Samye: Being the same

Kaivalyam: Absolute liberation, true freedom, the realization of yoga (union)

Iti: Finally, in the end

When the sattvic mind becomes as pure as Purusha, they become one. Ultimately, the state where the mind is the same as Purusha is called absolute liberation, or true freedom.

We know that the mind is colored by the external world due to suffering (kleshas), ignorance (avidya), and karmas. However, through the path of yoga, the mind, freed from tamasic and rajasic elements, fills with sattva. But sattva is fragile and can become polluted at any moment. It requires constant effort to keep it stable. There comes a time when the mind anchors in sattva. This state is the state of pure sattva.

This chapter ends with the word "iti." "Iti" means "finally" or "in the end." The yogi's destiny, sooner or later, is to find true freedom in the end.

Freedom

Sutra 4.1

Janma aushadhi mantra tapah samadhijah siddhayah

Janma: Birth

Aushadhi: Plants

Mantra: Repetition of sacred sounds and words

Tapah: Intense spiritual practice, self-discipline

Samadhijah: Arising from samadhi

Siddhayah: Mystical powers, transcendental experiences

Extraordinary powers can be either innate or acquired through the use of plants, chanting mantras, practicing strict discipline, or attaining samadhi.

A significant portion of the previous section was dedicated to practices that can be undertaken to acquire mystical powers. This new section begins by addressing the same topic.

1. Some are born with very special talents and powers. Many people have witnessed such examples. This is like the continuation of a film, where the efforts and works from previous lives carry on into the present one. Mozart's musical genius, displayed at the age of four, can only be explained in this way.
2. People have always pursued being powerful and privileged, using plants and creating magical mixtures to achieve this. The power they gained in this way has been used for various intentions.
3. The power of sound and speech is very important. Mantras are powerful sounds or words that have been imbued with meaning for thousands of years. In the first chapter, the "OM" mantra was discussed. The tradition of chanting in religions comes from this. A mantra can be used with a specific purpose or intention.
4. One of the nyama rules, tapas, is a powerful practice that disciplines a person. By applying self-discipline, a person can acquire extraordinary powers.
5. Finally, it is reminded that samadhi also grants a person very special powers.

Throughout this book, the path to samadhi and its methods have been explained. The other methods listed above can make a person extraordinary but the only solid and powerful path that leads to enlightenment is through samadhi.

Sutra 4.2

Jatyantara parinamah prakritiapurat

Jatyantara: To be born as a different type

Parinamah: Transformation

Prakriti: Creative power, nature

Apurat: To flow, abundance in the flow

The natural flow of Prakriti creates the most suitable form for a person in order to facilitate their transformation on the path to enlightenment.

A being transitioning from the mineral form to the plant form carries within it the potential to become an animal. The animal form has the potential to become human, and the human form continues with the potential to become divine. In reality, these processes are the journey of consciousness. As consciousness evolves, the form adapts accordingly.

An astronaut wears clothing suited to their purpose. Similarly, a diver chooses their outfit based on the pressure of the ocean floor. In the same way, the most suitable form for a person to experience is produced by nature, or Prakriti. The human body and the experiences that come with it are perfectly arranged to support the person's development on the path to enlightenment.

It should be noted and reminded that the common destiny of all forms is to awaken to their true selves, which is enlightenment. Recognizing the potential to become divine within oneself and engaging in practices to awaken it opens the doors to a transformative journey that will change everything.

Sutra 4.3

Nimittam aprayojakam prakritinam varanabhedas tu tatah kshetrikavat

Nimittam: Incidental situations

Aprayojakam: These do not directly cause

Prakritinam: Creative power, natural formations

Varana: Obstacles

Bhedas: To remove

Tu: However

Tatah: Thus, therefore

Kshetrikavat: Like a gardener

Coincidences do not directly lead to enlightenment, but they remove the obstacles that stand in the way of it. This is similar to a gardener clearing the blockages in the water channel to ensure that the garden is properly watered.

In this sutra, it is explained that events that appear to be coincidental are created by nature to clear the blockages in the process of enlightenment. This effect is likened to the work of a gardener who opens the channels to allow water to flow, ensuring that the garden is properly watered.

Sacredness is a privilege that everyone is born with. However, there may be obstacles that prevent this truth from being seen. Certain events, which are based on a person's own merit but are often perceived as coincidences, help in the removal of these obstacles.

Doğa ana, kalıcı huzuru ve barışı bulmaları konusunda kişilerin çabalarını ödüllendirmek için hazır beklemektedir. Aydınlanmak konusunda kişisel çaba ve doğa birlikte çalışırlar. Kutsal kitaplar der ki: “Sen Tanrıya doğru bir adım atarsan, o sana doğru on adım atar.”

Sutra 4.4

Nirmana chittani asmita matrat

Nirmana: To create, to produce

Chitta: Mind, consciousness (the realm that encompasses all layers of the mind, such as thoughts, emotions, memories, intellect, ego, etc.)

Asmita: Sense of self, ego

Matrat: Only

Only the ego creates the layers in the mind.

At the beginning of creation, there is the cosmic mind. This is a singular mind that encompasses all of existence, representing the collective consciousness. At this point, there is no sense of self yet.

Then, asmita, or the sense of self, arises. Asmita means ego. Over time, the ego leads the person to separate themselves from other individuals. The sense of self turns into selfishness. Due to the ego's belief in its separateness from the whole, desires, ambitions, hatred, and fears arise. The layers of the mind, such as the past, future, memories, and the subconscious, come into being with the emergence of the ego. Personal adventures and scenarios begin to manifest here.

Yoga is about taking the mind out of its multifaceted state and returning it to its original condition. This is what "Yogah chitta vritti nirodhah" means.

Sutra 4.5

Pravrtti bhedo prayojakam chittam ekam anekesham

Pravrtti: Function, activity

Bhedo: Different, varied

Prayojakam: To manage

Chitta: Mind, consciousness (the realm that encompasses all layers of the mind, such as thoughts, emotions, memories, intellect, ego, etc.)

Eka: One

Anekesham: Other, many

The source of consciousness is singular. It manages the mental layers that have different functions.

The body is controlled through the mind. Only the original mind, or consciousness, can control the different layers of the mind that have arisen under the influence of the ego. It is through yoga and meditation that one realizes that all these layers known as the "self" are illusions.

Sutra 4.6

Tatra dhyana-jam anayasam

Tatra: Of these

Dhyana-jam: Born through meditation

Anayasam: That which does not create karma, not stored in the subconscious

The mind born through meditation is a mind that does not create karma.

It is through meditation that pure consciousness can stop the mental layers created by the ego. The actions of this mind, born through meditation, do not create karma.

Sutra 4.7

Karma asukla akrishnam yoginah trividham itaresham

Karma: Action

Asukla: Not white

Akrishnam: Not black

Yoginah: Of the yogis

Trividham: Threefold

Itaresham: Of others

The actions of yogis are neither white nor black. Others, however, create three types of actions (white, black, and gray).

Action, if it does not carry an intention or purpose, and if it is just and impartial, does not create a result. The yogi, when performing actions, acts according to the law of dharma, seeking perfection. Perfection in action means that it does not create karma after it. Such actions do not generate new karmas. The yogi does the best they can, and that is all. They are not concerned with the outcomes.

For others, there are three types of actions: white actions that create good karma, black actions that create bad karma, and gray actions, which are a mixture of both.

People create their actions based on their own interests. They aim to achieve a result through their behavior, and they do. The karma created by white actions brings happiness, while black actions create karmas that bring difficulty and pain. Gray actions create karmas that are a mix of both pain and pleasure. Karmas also become the cause for creating other situations. Thus, an endless cycle continues.

Sutra 4.8

Tatah tad vipaka anugunanam eva abhivyaktih vasa- nanam

Tatah: Thus, therefore

Tad: That, it, him, her, them, this, this one, these

Vipaka: Maturation, fruition

Anugunanam: Suitable conditions

Eva: Only

Abhivyaktih: To manifest, to emerge, to create

Vasananam: Subconscious tendencies, desires, wishes

Actions, through suitable conditions, mature and create tendencies in the subconscious.

The effects of black and white actions are stored in the subconscious. The impressions in the subconscious are called samskara, and the desires and cravings necessary for the emergence of samskaras are called vasanas. Vasana is a very important and frequently used term. Vasanas come into play depending on the conditions that arise and create tendencies within the person to bring forth samskaras.

These tendencies lead to actions and karmas. Until they are purified, the cycle continues, the person reincarnates, and the experiences are repeated.

Sutra 4.9

Jati desa kala vyavahitanam api anantaryam smrti samskarayoh ekarupatvat

Jati: Type, race

Desa: Place

Kala: Time

Vyavahitanam: Distant, separate

Api: Even, also

Anantaryam: Continuing consecutively

Smrti: Memory, recollection

Samskarayoh: The deepest impressions in the mind, subconscious impressions

Eka-rupatvat: Their similarity

Due to the subconscious impressions accumulated in the memory, although there may be differences in race, place, and time, each new life actually continues in the same way as the previous one, as if there has been no interruption.

Here, when referring to smrti, or memory, it is about the tendencies created in the person by the traces of past lives in their new life. This is why people are born with their curiosities, natural inclinations, and areas of interest.

Rebirth, even if it occurs in a different race, place, or time, each being continues their life from where they left off. It is as if they woke up the next morning and continued their daily life exactly as before.

Learning this knowledge awakens individuals to the fact that they cannot escape the responsibilities of life and makes them conscious of the importance and value of the present life.

Sutra 4.10

Tasam anaditvam cha asishah nityatvat

Tasam: Therefore

Anaditvam: Beginningless, without a beginning

Cha: And

Asishah: Desire for life

Nityatvat: Eternal, permanent

Therefore, impressions and memories create an infinite desire for life.

The desire and will to live always exists. As desires continue, the wish to fulfill them, followed by the creation of actions and the cycle where the result of one action leads to another, continues endlessly. In other words, as long as karma exists, this cycle will never end.

They say, "The defeated wrestler never tires of the fight." Similarly, as long as a person does not cleanse their samskaras and thus their karmas, lives and the desire for life will continue.

Sutra 4.11

Hetu phala asraya alambanaih sangrhitatvat esham abhave tad abhavah

Hetu: Cause

Phala: Result

Asraya: Being the foundation, providing support

Alambanaih: External factors

Sangrhitatvat: Indivisible, interdependent

Esham: These

Abhave: Absence, disappearance

Tad: That, it, him, her, them, this, this one, these

Abhavah: To cease, to vanish

There is a mental foundation that shapes the cause-and-effect relationship, along with an external factor that plays a role in their formation. These factors support each other and are interconnected. If these factors cease to exist, the samskaras also disappear.

In the previous sutra, the eternity of life was expressed in relation to karmas. As a result, the question of how one can be freed from karmas naturally arises. Here, a detailed answer to this question is provided.

The continuity of the karma cycle depends on an arising cause, the result of that cause, a mental foundation, and an external factor. Let's explain each of these individually:

1. Cause: For there to be a result, there must be a cause that creates it. Whether this cause is good or bad, if there is a purpose or intention behind it, it will ultimately create a result, i.e., an action.
2. Result: The situation that arises is the result, and as previously mentioned, this result will, in turn, become the cause of another situation.
3. Mental foundation: The cause-and-effect relationship continues endlessly, unless the mental foundation changes. A tamasic mind leads to pain and suffering; a rajasic mind creates confusion and unrest. Actions performed with a sattvic mind lead to good fortune, happiness, and well-being.

The subject of this sutra is the removal of subconscious impressions that lead to karma, i.e., samskaras. Unless the mental foundation changes, it will not be possible to eliminate samskaras as long as the mind carries tamasic, rajasic, or sattvic influences.

4. External factors: What is meant by this is the external environment that creates situations. This is very important. In nature and quiet environments, there are fewer external objects that stimulate the mind, allowing it to rest. On the other hand, large and crowded cities are filled with numerous objects that trigger the mind, creating desires and unrest.

In yoga, there is a concept of creating the right environment. One should distance themselves from tamasic and rajasic environments and individuals, making choices accordingly.

With the right environment, a strong mental structure, and knowledge of yoga, one can find the path to liberating themselves from the impressions stored in the subconscious.

Sutra 4.12

Atita anagatam svarupatah asti adhvabhedat dharmanam

Atita: Past

Anagatam: Future

Svarupatah: Its true form

Asti: It exists

Adhvabhedat: Varies according to conditions

Dharmanam: Quality, form

The existence of the past and future is real. However, the characteristics of this reality vary depending on the conditions (perspective).

People who share the same memories may have different interpretations of the past and future. In fact, even a person's own interpretations of their past and future change over time.

What is the reason for this? The answer to this question is explained in the next sutra.

Sutra 4.13

Te vyakta sukshma gunatmanah

Te: These

Vyakta: Manifested

Sukshma: So subtle that they cannot be perceived by the five senses

Gunatmanah: According to the state of the gunas present in nature

These may have manifested (the past) or be subtle (the future). And their nature changes according to the distribution of the gunas.

It is the distribution of the gunas that determines a person's relationship with the past and future. If tamas dominate, the person carries the past as a heavy burden and is pessimistic about the future. If rajas predominate, the person is more concerned with the future than the past, and for rajasic individuals, both the past and present are blurry. If sattva qualities are dominant, the person recalls the past with a smile and looks toward the future with confidence.

In Prakriti, everything is constantly changing due to the gunas. Accordingly, the mind, which is in constant transformation, keeps altering both the past and the future.

Sutra 4.14

Parinama ekatvat vastu tattvam

Parinama: Transformation

Ekatvat: The reality of oneness, unity

Vastu: Objects, things

Tattvam: Essence, the true reality

When the mind, having completed its transformation, realizes the reality of "oneness," it is understood that the essence of everything in the external world is the same.

As long as one experiences the world at the level of the mind, it is inevitable to perceive the world as multiple and to think of oneself and the world as separate. It must be realized that the created world is a product of the individual's own mind and that it does not represent the ultimate truth. This is duality, and overcoming it means overcoming the mind. In reality, the true essence of the external world, which appears in different forms, is one and the same.

Once again, the concept of vairagya, or renunciation, appears. This concept was discussed in the 12th sutra of the first chapter. Renouncing attachments, habits, and clinging. Here, it is emphasized once again that in order to create transformation, the mind must give up expressing itself through the external world.

For the person who has realized their true self, duality no longer exists. Kaivalya, or liberation is the realization of this. The true goal is not to calm the mind and achieve a peaceful state. It is to allow the mind to return to its own essence, its true nature, and through that, realize the truth.

Sutra 4.15

Vastu samye chitta bheda tayoh vibhaktah panthah

Vastu: Objects, things

Samye: Same

Chitta: Mind, consciousness (the realm that encompasses all layers of the mind, such as thoughts, emotions, memories, intellect, ego, etc.)

Bheda: Different

Tayoh: Of these two

Vibhaktah: Division, separation

Panthah: Paths, different perceptions

Since each mind's perception is different, the way objects are perceived also varies from person to person.

One of the underlying causes of difference is that everyone's samskaras are unique to them. Additionally, the balance of gunas that determines each person's mental character constantly changes. Not only does everything vary from person to person, but it can also change over time within the same individual. However, the object itself remains the same and is as it is.

Is it possible to see the object in all its reality?

In daily life, due to mental fluctuations, we perceive life as chaotic. Therefore, one must approach the reality of the world that is currently being perceived with doubt. This is because, for things to be seen as they truly are, the mind must first be calmed.

When the mental fluctuations (vrittis) cease, it is indeed possible to perceive an object as it truly is. This is because, in such a mind, there are no transformations or distortions.

It should be remembered that the mind's primary substance is sattva. However, because the mind is colored by the tamasic and rajasic elements of maya and influenced by the ego, it filters everything through its own lens. It cannot see anything as it truly is. This is why remaining neutral and impartial in yoga is taught. Every mind perceives everything according to its own karmic structure.

The glory of the state of samadhi lies here. In samadhi, all vrittis, or waves in the mind, are withdrawn, allowing things and events to appear in their true form, as they truly are.

Sutra 4.16

Na cha eka chitta tantram ched vastu tat pramanakam tada kim syat

Na: Not

Cha: And

Eka: One, single

Chitta: Mind

Tantram: Dependent, conditioned

Ched: If

Vastu: Objects, things

Tat: That, it, them, these

Pramanakam: Unperceived

Tada: Then, therefore

Kim: What

Syat: To emerge, to exist

The existence of an object is not dependent on the mind perceiving it. So, what happens to an object that the mind does not perceive?

Prakriti exists whether the mind perceives it or not. If the mind does not see an object, it simply means that the object has not caught the mind's attention. However, the object still remains there.

Whether people perceive it or not, this vast universe, stars, and planets continue to exist, the Earth keeps revolving, and the situations and events in human life continue to unfold.

Sutra 4.17

Tad uparaga apeksitvat chittasya vastu jnata ajnatam

Tad: That, it, him, her, them, this, this one, these

Uparaga: Conditioned, colored mind

Apeksitvat: Due to necessity

Chittasya: Mental

Vastu: Objects, things

Jnata: Known

Ajnatam: Unknown

The known or unknown nature of objects is related to the person's mind. If the person's conditioned mind requires it, the object becomes known.

In the previous sutra, it was stated that objects continue to exist whether the person knows them or not. In this sutra, however, it is said that the knowledge of an object is limited by the person's needs or conditioning.

A person's mind is as vast as their own world and body. Just like a spider lives within the web it has created, individuals live within the web of their own minds, and their perceptions are limited by it.

The more a person lives focused on their own ego, the smaller their world becomes. However, as perception expands, the ego shrinks, and the world becomes broader.

Sutra 4.18

Sada jnatah chitta vrittayah tad prabhoh Purushasya aparinamityat

Sada: Always

Jnatah: Known

Chitta: In the mind

Vrittayah: Waves, changes, and transformations

Tadprabhoh: Of God

Purushasya: Pure consciousness

Aparinamityat: Unchanging

Because pure consciousness (Purusha) is unchanging, it constantly knows the fluctuations of the mind, which are in a state of continuous change.

All levels of the mind and consciousness are in a constant state of change and transformation. This is the fundamental law of nature. However, Purusha, being unchanging, simply observes and witnesses it. All the activities in the mind are perfectly known by Purusha.

In this sutra, Patanjali states that all the layers of chitta (the mind) are constantly changing, but Purusha remains the same and unchanging, while simultaneously witnessing everything.

The body and mind are two different levels of the same substance. Both are in motion, but at different speeds. The mind is fast, while the body is slow. If their speeds were not different, it would not be understood that they are two separate entities. Their movement is understood because of the stable ground behind them, which is Purusha. Purusha, pure and unchanging, is always there. Everything is like images appearing on the same steady and immovable movie screen.

The word sada in this sutra, meaning "always," emphasizes the infinity of Purusha. Purusha's eternal witnessing becomes known only when consciousness is purified.

Here, the term witnessing is more appropriate than knowing, as witnessing is a passive act, while knowing is an active one.

Sutra 4.19

Na tat svabhasam drsyatvat

Na: No

Tat: He, him, his, they, this, this one, its, these

Svabhasam: Self-luminous, self-illuminating

Drsyatvat: Being known through that

The mind is knowable due to the light of Purusha because the mind has no light of its own.

The act of seeing is only possible with light. However, the mind has no light of its own. Just as the Moon becomes visible thanks to the Sun, the mind can only manifest through Purusha. While perceiving objects, the mind does so with the light it receives from Purusha.

During samadhi, the yogi moves through different levels of mental vibrations. What is perceived at one level becomes the perceiver at a higher level. As finer vibrational levels are reached, the lower mental levels are easily perceived.

The yogi realizes that from the lowest level to the highest, the perception of all levels is possible. There is only one force to which they adhere and from which they originate. That is Purusha.

Sutra 4.20

Ekasamaye cha ubhaya anavadharanam

Ekasamaye: Aynı anda

Cha: Ve

Ubhaya: İki birden

Anavadharanam: İdrak edemez

The mind cannot simultaneously perceive both external objects and its own essence.

The mind either perceives the external world or turns toward its own essence. While perceiving external objects, it is itself perceived by Purusha. It cannot do both at the same time. In other words, the mind cannot be both subject and object. It is an object for the soul, while it is the subject when perceiving the world.

From another perspective, we can interpret this sutra as follows: the mind cannot do multiple things at the same time. For example, it cannot see one thing while simultaneously hearing another. The mind perceives only one thing at a time, but it moves so quickly that we mistakenly believe it is doing many things at once.

People who believe they are thinking about many things at once in daily life do not realize that the mind is actually jumping from one topic to another and still perceiving only one thing at a time. Due to the speed of the mind, this bombardment of emotions and thoughts exhausts and unsettles a person. This is stress.

Different sense organs can engage with multiple subjects at the same time. However, the mind acts like a gatekeeper, admitting them in a sequential order. For this reason, giving the mind multiple commands at once leads to confusion and stress.

The mind is fast in the act of perception, but it operates one step at a time. Only minds that have reached the state of nirvikalpa samadhi attain the ability to perceive multiple things simultaneously. This is because, in that state, time is erased, and the sequential order created by time no longer exists.

Sutra 4.21

Chittantara drisye buddhibuddheh atiprasangah smrtisankarah cha

Chitta: Mind

Antara: Another

Drishye: Seen, perceived

Buddhibuddheh: The knower of knowledge, the knowledge of perception

Atiprasanga: Infinite, endless

Smrti: Memory

Sankarah: Confusion

Cha: And

If there were multiple minds, each would have its own perceiver and memory. Due to an infinite number of perceivers and memories belonging to different minds, great confusion would arise.

The mind is layered, with each layer having a different energy vibration. When a person observes their thoughts during meditation, they are using a higher level of their own mind. These are not separate minds but different layers of the same mind.

The sutra states that if there were multiple minds, each would have its own buddhi and memory, leading to complete chaos. Buddhi is the part of the mind responsible for perception and is the closest to the light of Purusha. It is the highest layer of the mind, the perceiving aspect that distinguishes between what is real and what is not.

Sutra 4.22

Citeh apratisamkramayah tadakarapattau svabuddhisamvedanam

Citeh: Recognizing the true essence

Apratisamkramayah: Unchanging, not moving from one place to another

Tad: That, it, its, they, this, this one, these

Akara: Form

Pattau: Emerging with the light received from the essence

Sva: Own essence

Buddhi: The highest layer of the mind that perceives everything

Samvedanam: Experiencing, identifying oneself with it

Consciousness realizes its true essence only when it identifies itself with that which is unchanging.

Just as a coin has two sides, consciousness also has two sides. Here, the word buddhi is used instead of consciousness. If buddhi turns towards the external world, it identifies itself with it. In doing so, it still derives its light from Purusha.

Just as a dirty mirror that cannot reflect an image clearly needs to be cleaned, buddhi also needs to be cleansed of the illusions of the external world and directed toward the pure truth of Purusha. Buddhi is very close to the light of Purusha. With this awareness, if it turns away from the external world and toward Purusha, it finds its true form. At this stage, the light of Purusha flows directly onto buddhi. Thus, the soul becomes capable of reflecting the soul.

As previously stated, chitta has different levels. During samadhi, the mind transitions from one vibration to another, moving from the surface toward the center. The center always remains the same. In samadhi, buddhi passes through and transcends even the deepest levels of chitta. At that point, chitta is surpassed.

This state is the state of liberation from the mind. Here, buddhi attains its true nature. In this state, the knower, the known, and knowledge merge and become one.

Sutra 4.23

Drashtr drsya uparaktam chittam sarvartham

Drashtr: The seer, the one who sees everything

Drsya: The seen, the external world

Uparaktam: Reflected, influenced

Chittam: All levels of the mind

Sarvartham: Understanding, perceiving, comprehending everything

When the mind becomes a reflection of both the seer and the seen, it attains the ability to perceive everything.

The mind acts as a bridge between the seer and the seen. In other words, one part of the mind is rooted in the soul, while the other is connected to the body. Because of this, the mind reflects both the light of Purusha and the ignorance of Prakriti.

An ordinary person believes that their consciousness is all-knowing and real. However, as one begins to train and evolve, they realize that consciousness has no independent existence of its own. It is merely a tool for Purusha and is dependent on it.

When the waves calm down, they lose their identity and merge with the ocean, becoming one with it. Similarly, when a seeker calms the senses, mind, intellect, and consciousness, the identity created by these elements will disappear, the seeker will dissolve, and unity with the soul will be attained.

Sutra 4.24

Tat asankhyeya vasanabhih chitram api parartham samhatya karitvat

Tat: That, it, its, they, this, this one, these

Asankhyeya: Countless

Vasanabhih: Impressions, desires

Chitram: Multicolored, diverse, varied

Api: Despite, at the same time

Parartham: For the other

Samhatya: Together with it

Karitvat: Because of it, due to it

Although the mind is filled with countless impressions and diverse desires, its purpose of being is not to satisfy them but to turn toward Purusha. This is because the mind can only exist through Purusha.

The mind, filled with impressions and desires, spends its life chasing after them. Desires and the attachment and captivity to them were mentioned.

Here, additional information on this topic is provided.

All these pursuits are, in fact, rehearsals for reaching true happiness, even to the source of true happiness. For example, love for the opposite sex is a rehearsal for divine love. The pursuit of wealth reflects a longing for the infinite abundance of the divine. A person who experiences pleasure and happiness naturally desires to attain the endlessness, the truth, and the essence of it.

Sutra 4.25

Visesha darsinah atmabhava bhavana nivrittih

Visesha: Distinction, difference

Darsinah: One's perception, seeing

Atmabhava: Essence of consciousness

Bhavana: Reflection, feeling, understanding

Nivrittih: Dissolution, disappearance, withdrawal

When one understands the difference between the individual soul and the mind, all mistaken beliefs about their true identity disappear.

For the one who separates chitta from Atman, the search has come to an end. This is the point where they realize that even the subtlest and highest layers of chitta are not all-knowing but merely a tool for the soul. For this person, Prakriti has disappeared, self-realization has been attained, and they have reached Purusha.

Avidya, or ignorance, has now come to an end. The answer to the question "Who am I?" has come to light.

Sutra 4.26

Tada viveka nimnam kaivalya pragbharam chittam

Tada: From then on, therefore, at that moment

Viveka: Discernment, power of distinction

Nimnam: Inclination, turning towards

Kaivalya: Absolute freedom, liberation, enlightenment

Pragbharam: Being drawn towards it

Chittam: Levels of the mind

With the discernment it has gained, the mind is now being drawn toward its source—absolute freedom.

Under the influence of viveka, the power of discernment, all levels of the mind are drawn toward kaivalya, absolute freedom, as if caught in a gravitational pull. This is the attraction of transcendental love. The mind is now being drawn toward the beloved it has long yearned for.

The inclination toward worldly pleasures has completely vanished, and all doubts and prejudices have come to an end.

Sutra 4.27

Tat cchidreshu pratyayantarani samskarebhyah

Tat: That, it, its, they, this, this one, these

Cchidreshu: A gap in between, a crack, a fissure

Pratyaya: Thought

Antarani: Other, different

Samskarebhyah: Impressions arising from the deepest layers

Even at this high level, a remnant of an impression from the subconscious may find a crack to emerge and reveal itself.

Even at the highest levels, the mind must be observed with great care. A deeply buried samskara from the subconscious may rise to the surface, creating a separation between Purusha and consciousness. This can disturb one's mental tranquility and peace.

This is a very likely occurrence, and the sutra serves as a warning.

Sutra 4.28

Hanam esham klesavad uktam

Hanam: Elimination, removal

Esham: Them, those

Klesavad: Like the **Kleshas** (afflictions, pains)

Uktam: To describe, to explain

They (samskaras) are also eliminated using the method described for removing the kleshas.

The word klesha is a general term for thought patterns that cause suffering. In the second chapter of the book, the situations that give rise to suffering—kleshas—were examined one by one. These include attachments, ego, and the fear of death, all of which persist due to ignorance (avidya). It was stated that once one realizes that suffering is temporary and arises from ignorance, the kleshas lose their power.

This sutra also states that the remnants of samskaras, which may suddenly arise and create obstacles on the path to enlightenment, will be eliminated using the same method.

For those who have traveled far on the path of yoga—experienced and wise individuals—dealing with these samskaras is no longer a challenge. Having experienced samadhi many times, they deeply understand the nature of emerging samskaras and the tricks of the mind.

Sutra 4.29

Prasamkhyane api akusidasya sarvatha vivekakyateh dharmameghah samadhih

Prasamkhyane: The highest knowledge

Api: Even, also

Akusidasya: The state of being unattached to anything

Sarvatha: In every way, at all times

Vivekakyateh: Knowledge gained through discernment

Dharmameghah: The cloud that showers virtue

Samadhih: The state of complete unity and integration through deep meditation

When a person becomes so independent that they no longer have even the slightest attachment to the highest knowledge gained through discernment, they attain dharmamegha samadhi.

This sutra explains that when a person loses interest even in the highest knowledge and becomes completely independent of everything worldly, virtue will shower upon them like a rain cloud, bringing abundance and blessings.

Dharma is the highest expression of a person's existence. Although this may vary according to each individual's nature, ultimately, the purpose of the journey remains one and the same.

Yoga teaches that life should be lived in alignment with dharma, but many things in life can be tempting and misleading. The yogi moves forward on the path of yoga with awareness and faith. After a while, all the achievements they have gained start to feel unnecessary and insignificant.

At the very moment when they renounce and let go of everything they have attained, they encounter an extraordinary reward.

This is the highest level of samadhi. At this stage, a person attains knowledge directly and effortlessly. In the state of dharmamegha samadhi, virtue envelops the individual like a cloud, and knowledge pours down upon them like rain.

There is no longer any need for thinking, searching, or relying on the mind. The person has reached such a state that whatever they do or say stands as the very embodiment of virtue itself.

Sutra 4.30

Tatah klesha karma nivrittih

Tatah: From then on, after that

Klesha: Obstacles, afflictions, suffering

Karma: Actions that lead to the formation of samskaras at a deep level, the law of karma

Nivrittih: To erase, to eliminate, to remove

After dharmamegha samadhi, all suffering and karmas are completely eliminated.

When the rain of the virtue cloud begins to fall, the five types of suffering and their extensions return to their source. As a result, actions that do not generate karma come into play. Since these actions are not tied to outcomes, they no longer produce karma.

At this level, the person is freed from the cycle of birth and death. Their individual identity and will have merged with the universal identity and universal will.

Sutra 4.31

Tada sarva avarana malapetasya jnanasya anantyat jneyam alpam

Tada: From then on, therefore, at that moment
Sarva: All, entire
Avarana: Veil, covering
Mala: Impurities, defects, ignorance-related filth
Apetasya: Disappearance, removal
Jnanasya: Of knowledge
Anantyat: Infinite, limitless
Jneyam: The known, that which can be known
Alpam: Small, insignificant

From this point on, the veil of ignorance is removed. The person realizes that everything they have learned through the mind is insignificant compared to the infinite experience they are now undergoing.

From this point on, the veil of ignorance and impurity disappears. The highest, absolute, pure, and infinite knowledge emerges. In the presence of infinite knowledge, everything finite loses its significance.

When the rain of virtue washes away all impurities, the yogi is freed from all judgments. The infinite light of the soul illuminates their consciousness, and the soul merges with consciousness. This union is yoga. From this point on, all knowledge gained through the senses loses its significance for them.

This sutra describes the yogi who has been liberated from suffering; their mind is at ease and clear, their heart pure and radiant like crystals.

Sutra 4.32

Tatah krtarthanam parinama krama samaptih gunanam

Tatah: From then on
Krtarthanam: Completion of purpose, fulfillment of duties
Parinama: Transformation
Krama: Sequence, order
Samaptih: Coming to an end
Gunanam: The three gunas (tamas, rajas, sattva)

With dharmamegha samadhi, the transformation and sequence of the gunas come to an end, as they have fulfilled their purpose.

When the yogi's consciousness begins to radiate the light of the soul, the rhythmic transformations of the gunas come to an end. They return to their source—Prakriti.

The intellect, mind, and consciousness, which belong to Prakriti, withdraw and settle into the soul (Purusha), where they come to rest.

The gunas are suspended and can be used again if needed in worldly life. From this point on, they serve the soul like faithful servants. Unlike before, they no longer have any influence or obstruct the light of the soul.

Swaroopananda, in his book Raja Yoga, says: “The mirror of the mind, created by Prakriti, is made of the three gunas. The purpose of Prakriti is to somehow cause suffering to the individual through the

gunas. Nature presents all experiences of pleasure and pain to the person. When the person understands the true nature of pleasure and pain and becomes independent from them, they then realize their own true nature."

Sutra 4.33

Kshana pratiyogi parinama aparanta nirgrahyah kramah

Kshana: Moment, instant

Pratiyogi: Continuously arranged

Parinama: Transformation

Aparanta: In the end, eventually

Nirgrahyah: Understandable, perceptible

Krama: Sequence, series

Thus, when the transformation of the gunas ceases, time is understood as the sequential arrangement of moments.

"Time describes infinite change, and space describes infinite separation." This is what Sri Yukteshvar says in his book The Holy Science.

Change is the most fundamental characteristic of Prakriti. The arrangement of time means the continuous flow of moments in the process of transformation. According to the yogi, time is a concept that can be halted.

It has been previously stated that the concepts of yesterday, today, and tomorrow are illusions related to the mind. Samadhi, the state of oneness, is the transcendence of the mind, or in other words, the transcendence of time.

Due to the speed of change in life, we perceive time as a continuous flow. Like the grains of wheat being ground in a mill, we believe life is endlessly undergoing change in the mill called time.

However, the moment is eternity. When the gunas, or actions, cease, time also comes to a halt. The yogi, who has reached perfection, lives in the "moment" without being involved in movement. They have become liberated from time and space. Others, however, continue to live caught in the web of time and space.

Sutra 4.34

Purusha artha sunyanam gunanam pratiprasavah kaivalyam svarupa pratishtha va chitisaktih iti

Purusha: Pure consciousness, supreme consciousness, soul, true self

Artha: Purpose

Sunyanam: Absence, lack

Gunanam: The three gunas, the three qualities

Pratiprasavah: Returning, withdrawal

Kaivalyam: Absolute freedom, liberation, enlightenment

Svarupa: One's true essence, own nature

Pratishtha: Establishment, settlement

Va: Or

Chiti: Consciousness

Shaktih: Power, energy

Iti: Finally, ultimately

When Purusha achieves its purpose, the gunas withdraw to their source. This is absolute freedom. Thus, in the end, Purusha settles into its true form, or consciousness returns to its natural power.

The attainment of Purusha's purpose means that there is no longer any need for experience in life. In Vivekananda's Raja Yoga, this is described as follows: "Nature, like a compassionate caretaker, lovingly takes the lost souls in its hands and, through various bodies, offers them every kind of experience so they may regain the light they have lost."

When experiences come to an end, the gunas—tamas, rajas, and sattva—that created the experiences also complete their tasks, thus the work of nature is finished. In this state, the return of the gunas to their source means that the mind also returns to its source.

Only Purusha and its infinite light and power remain. This is absolute freedom, liberation, independence, enlightenment—this is Kaivalya.

The yogi is now a shining light among people. They are a soul that has completed the world.

Thus, the spiritual journey mentioned in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras begins with the word *atha* (now) and ends with the word *iti* (finally, ultimately).

Asatoma sadgamaya
Tamasoma jyotir gamaya
Mrityorma amritam gamaya

From illusion to reality
From darkness to light
From mortality to eternity...

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad